福本伸行

●近代麻雀コミックス●
FUKUMOTO NOBUYUKI
Kindai Mahjong Comics
15

天

TEN
天和通りの快男児

TENHOU-DOORI NO KAIDANJI

THE NICE GUY ON THE PATH OF TENHOU

竹書房
TAKE SHOBOU

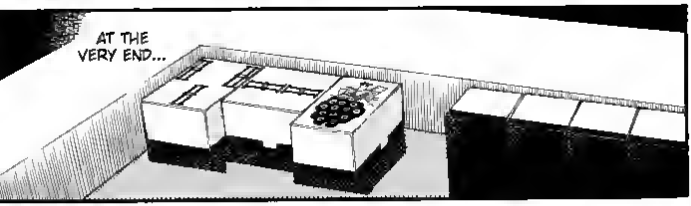
CHAPTER 129
THE MUD AND THE CLOUDS

ざわ…

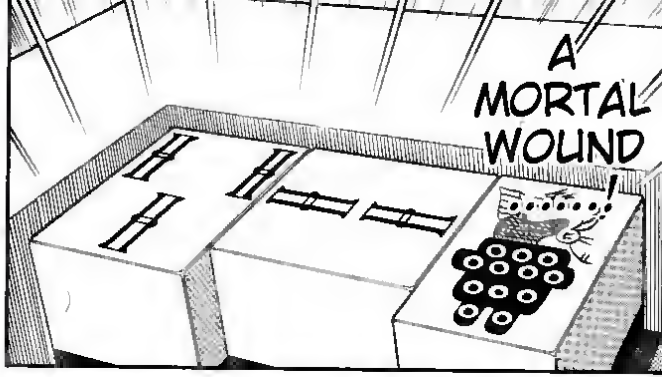
ざわ..
ざわ..
.....
HARADA
TEN GOT CONTROL OVER IT ...!
AND IT RAN FROM HIM ...!
IN THE END... HE CONTINUED TO MAKE MISTAKES
AND LOST HIS INTUITION
HAD BEEN FOOLED BY THE GOOD FORM OF HIS HAND
STAGE A OF THE 17TH BATTLE
HE SPUN TOGETHER THE THREADS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT
IN THAT TENPAI RACE
THE FINAL ROUND OF THE EAST-WEST BATTLE.

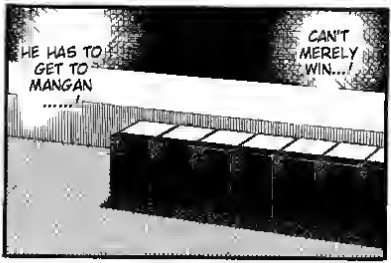
HIS BEST CHANCE TO TAKE OUT TEN .....!
BUT ...

I HAVEN'T LOST YET...!
BUT...
HE STRUCK A RETURN BLOW...!


AT THE VERY END...

IS HIS WEAK POINT .....!
..... THIS CALL .....
THE CALL TEN MADE IS A HUGE CLUE...!


A MORTAL WOUND!

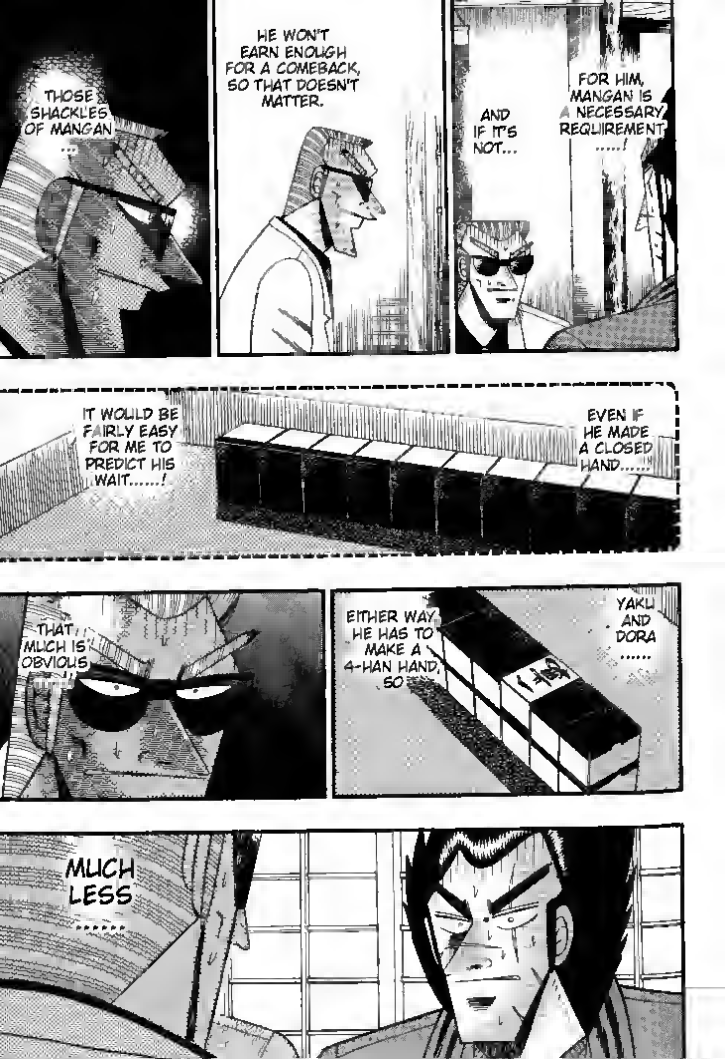

HE HAS TO GET TO MANGAN ...!
CAN'T MERELY WIN...!

TEN ...
THAT'S BECAUSE .....

IN SHORT
HE'LL MAKE A COMEBACK GAINST THE 12000 POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIS RIGHT NOW ...!

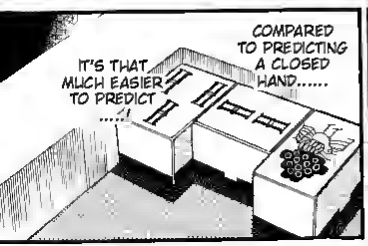
BY GETTING THAT...

12600 .....!
IF IT'S MANGAN, BY ADDING TWO DEALER STICKS...


THOSE SHACKLES OF MANGAN...
HE WON'T EARN ENOUGH FOR A COMEBACK, SO THAT DOESN'T MATTER.
AND IF IT'S NOT...
FOR HIM, MANGAN IS A NECESSARY REQUIREMENT.....!
IT WOULD BE FAIRLY EASY FOR ME TO PREDICT HIS WAIT.....!
EVEN IF HE MADE A CLOSED HAND.....
THAT MUCH IS OBVIOUS!!
EITHER WAY, HE HAS TO MAKE A 4-HAN HAND, SO
YAKU AND DORA .....
MUCH LESS.....

IF HE CALLS.....!
SO THEN...
BECOMES THAT MUCH MORE CLEAR.....
THE BASIS OF HIS HAND
AFTER THAT, CALL.....
IT'S A PURE 4-HAN HAND...!!
SINCE THE UNCERTAIN ELEMENTS ARE ERASED
IN SHORT...
THOSE YAKU ARE GONE.
URA-DORA...
RIICHI, IPPATSU, TSUMO...

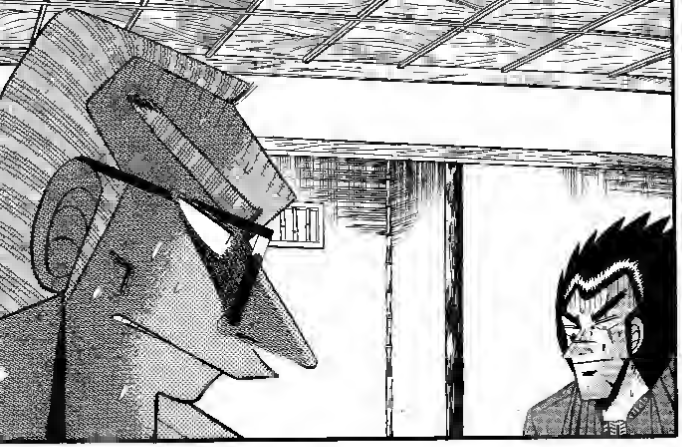
HE HAS TO REACH MANGAN ...!
WITH YAKU AND THE KNOWN DORA.....

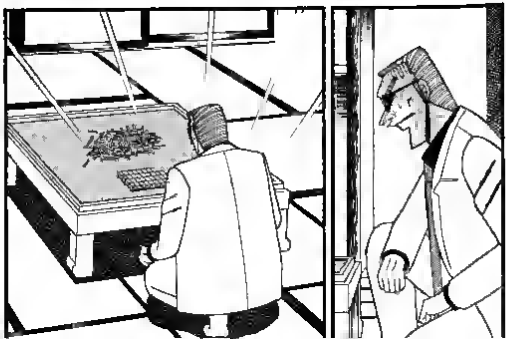

IT'S THAT MUCH EASIER TO PREDICT .....!
COMPARED TO PREDICTING A CLOSED HAND.....

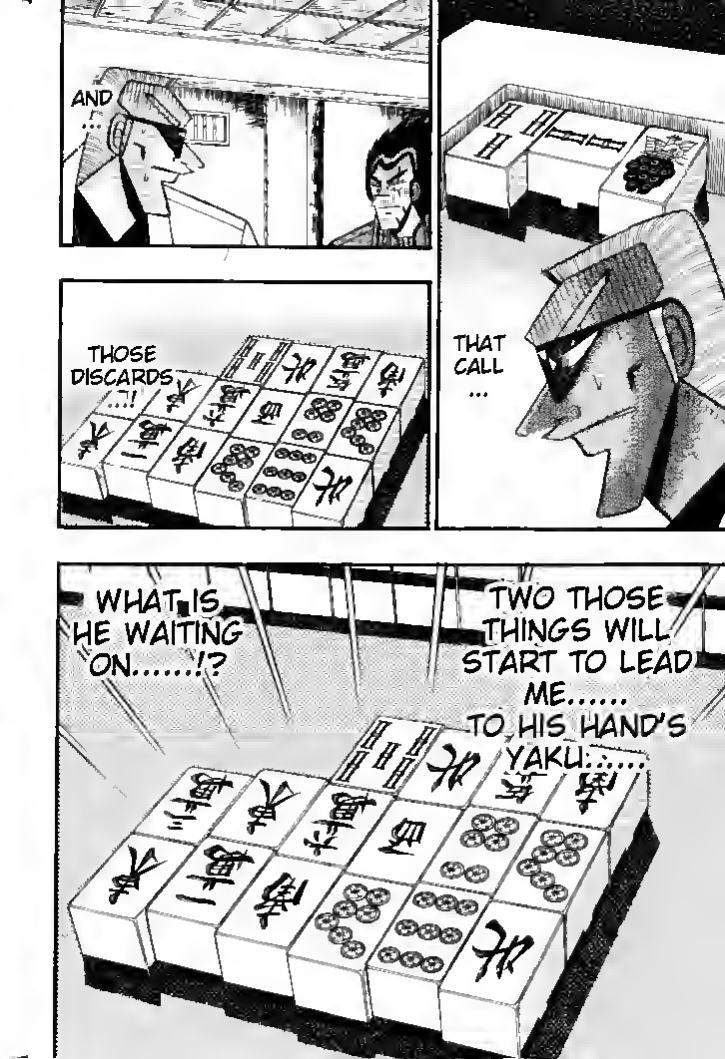
IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MUD AND THE CLOUDS!

YES ...

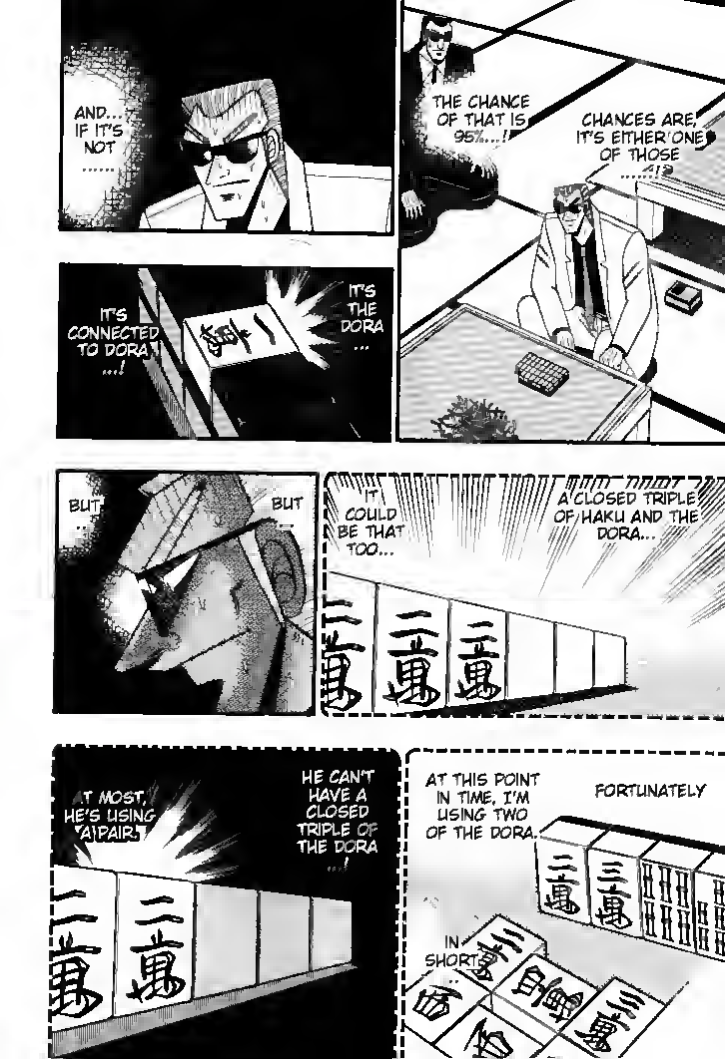
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO .....!?
IF I CAN'T DETECT IT WITH THAT

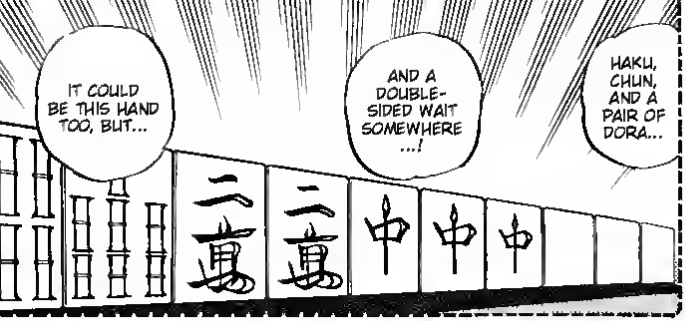



I'LL DETECT IT... I'M SURE OF IT...!

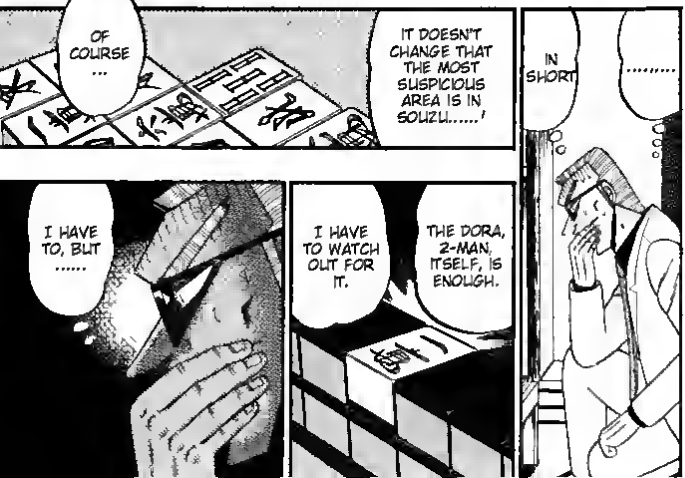

AND ...
THOSE DISCARDS ...!
THAT CALL ...
WHAT IS HE WAITING ON.....!?
TWO THOSE THINGS WILL START TO LEAD ME..... TO HIS HAND'S YAKU.....

IT'S OBVIOUS ...!
IS IT FANPAI CONNECTED TO HON-ITSU ...!?
FIRST OF ALL ...
FANPAI, CHANTA, 1 DORA ...!
OR .....


AND... IF IT'S NOT .....
THE CHANCE OF THAT IS 95%...!
CHANCES ARE, IT'S EITHER ONE OF THOSE .....
IT'S CONNECTED TO DORA ...!
IT'S THE DORA ...
BUT ...
BUT ...
IT COULD BE THAT TOO...
A CLOSED TRIPLE OF HAKU AND THE DORA...
AT MOST, HE'S USING A PAIR.
HE CAN'T HAVE A CLOSED TRIPLE OF THE DORA ...!
AT THIS POINT IN TIME, I'M USING TWO OF THE DORA.
FORTUNATELY
IN SHORT

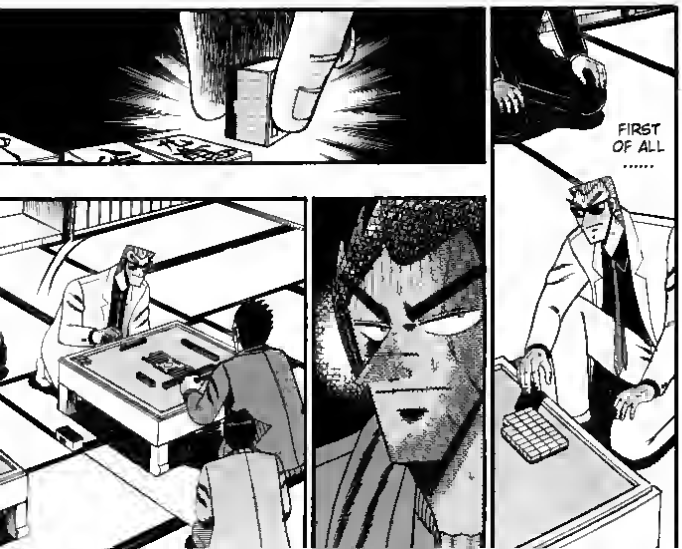

IT COULD BE THIS HAND TOO, BUT...
AND A DOUBLE-SIDED WAIT SOMEWHERE ...!
HAKU, CHUN, AND A PAIR OF DORA...

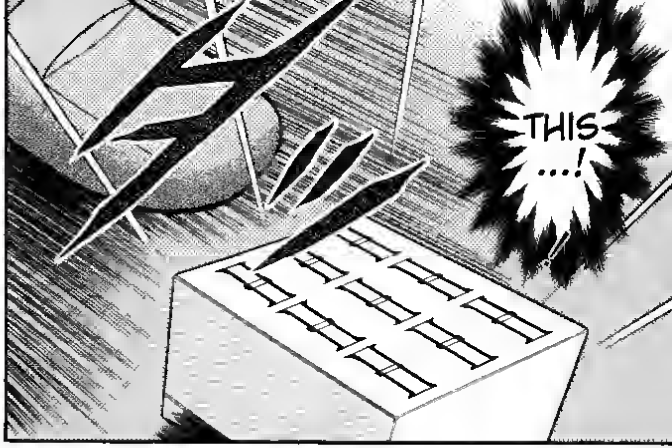
IT WOULD BE SOUZU, WOULDN'T IT...?
HIS WAIT WOULD BE THE SAME AS HON-ITSU...
EVEN IF IT WAS
FROM THOSE DISCARDS ...

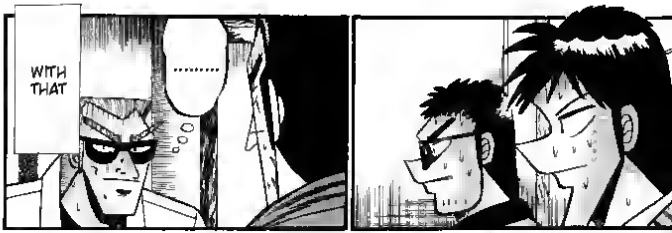

OF COURSE ...
IT DOESN'T CHANGE THAT THE MOST SUSPICIOUS AREA IS IN SOUZU.....!
IN SHORT
.....
I HAVE TO, BUT .....
I HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR IT.
THE DORA, 2-MAN, ITSELF, IS ENOUGH.

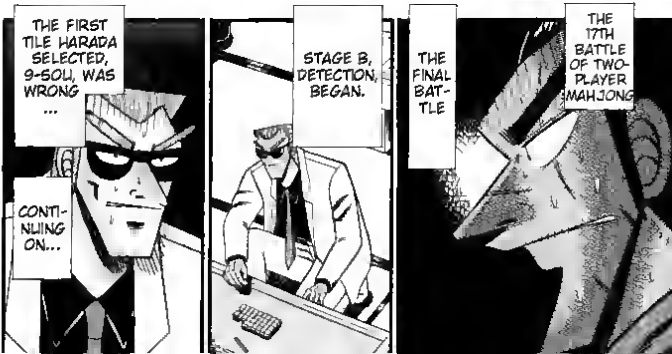
THERE'S TWO LEFT...
IF IT'S A CLOSED WAIT
ONE LEFT...
IF A SINGLE WAIT
I'M USING TWO OF THEM ...!
BUT .....
EMPTY ...!
THE DORA SIDE WAIT IS
IF IT'S A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT
MUCH LESS...
MORE IMPORTANTLY ...
THERE'S A LOW CHANCE OF GETTING IT...!

I SHOULD BE WATCHING OUT FOR...

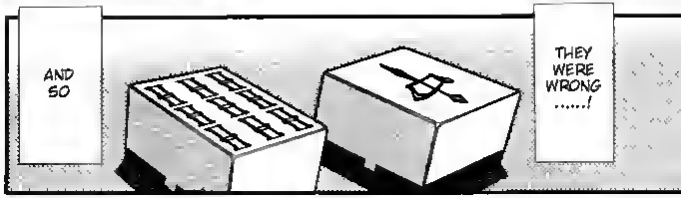

FIRST OF ALL .....


THIS ....!


WITH THAT
.....


THE FIRST TILE HARADA SELECTED, 9-SOU, WAS WRONG ...
CONTI-NUING ON...
STAGE B, DETECTION, BEGAN.
THE FINAL BAT-TLE
THE 17TH BATTLE OF TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG

BUT ...
CHUN ...!
THAT WASN'T IT EITHER ...!
KH...!
....
EITHER ONE COULD HAVE BEEN IT, BUT...
HE DIDN'T DETECT THE WAIT .....!
IT SEEM-ED
AND A KEY TILE FOR HON-ITSU AND CHANTA, THE 9-SOU.
WAS ON THE TABLE ...
NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THE CHUN


AND SO
THEY WERE WRONG .....!

MOVING ALONG .....!
HAD FIVE CHANCES TO DRAW.
TEN

THE FIRST ONE WAS
NO GOOD ...!
THE SECOND ...!
THAT 2ND ONE ...
UNEXPECTEDLY . . .

HE DREW IT...!

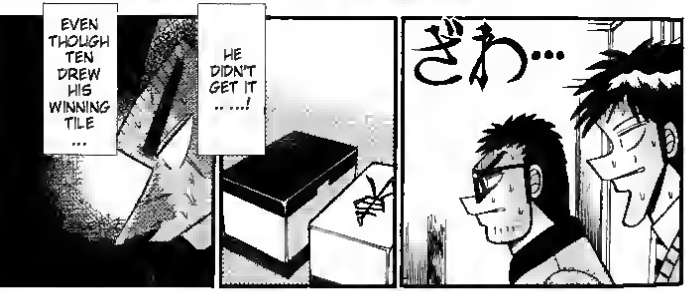
URGH..!

HIS WINNING TILE.....!

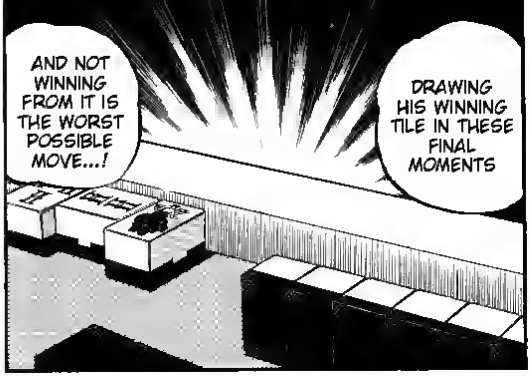
ざわ…
HE GOT IT ……!
SUDDENLY ……!
ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…
……
……
?…
HUH …?

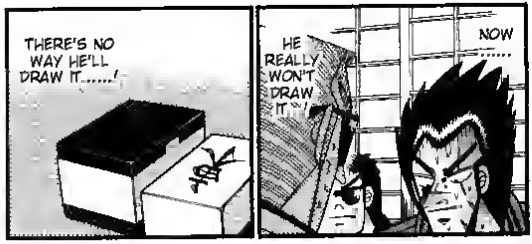
BUT...
IT'S MY WINNING TILE .....!
.....
I PASS .....!
..... I WON'T WIN FROM IT...!

ぎわ…


EVEN THOUGH TEN DREW HIS WINNING TILE …
HE DIDN'T GET IT …!
ぎわ…

PASSING ON THE LOWER-VALUE WIN……
HEH HEH …
HE DIDN'T GET MANGAN ……!





HE'S LOST IT NOW.....!

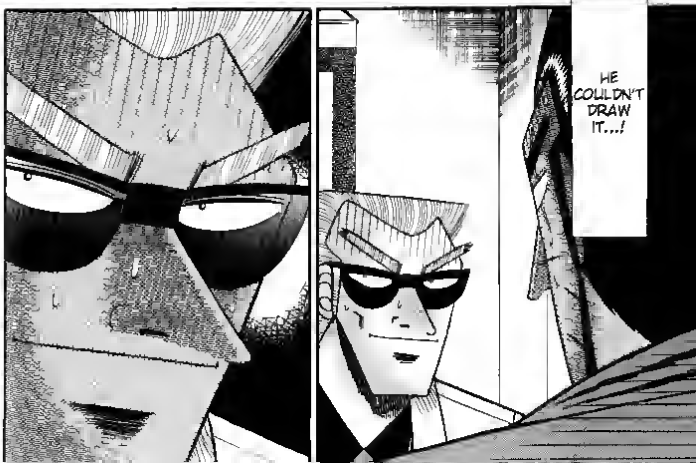
天
CHAPTER 130
EMPTY

EAST-WEST BATTLE: TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
ざわ…
ざわ…
……
THE FINAL ROUND.
STAGE 3, TENPAI DETECTION
ざわ…
THEY WERE WRONG…
ALTHOUGH HARADA SELECTED TWO TILES
COUNTING ON HIS THIRD DRAW AND BEYOND……
BUT
THIS GAVE TEN FIVE CHANCES TO DRAW.
AND THEN
HE DREW HIS WINNING TILE ON THE SECOND DRAW, BUT
BECAUSE IT WOULDN'T MAKE HIS HAND MANGAN
HE PASSED…
3RD
4TH…

NO GOOD ...!
THIS WAS THE LAST ONE ...!
THE 5TH

OF HIS FIRST SET OF DRAWS ...!
THE LAST ...
.....
BUT .....

NO GOOD ...!


HE COULDN'T DRAW IT...!

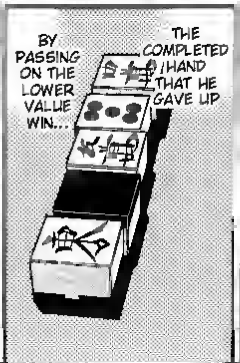
HEH
HEH
HEH
...
OF COURSE ...!
OF COURSE THAT'S THE RESULT...!
HEH HEH ...
WITHIN FIVE DRAWS.....!
AS IF HE'D DRAW A SECOND WINNING TILE.....

HE LOST THE CHANCE TO WIN.....!
HE LOST IT .....!

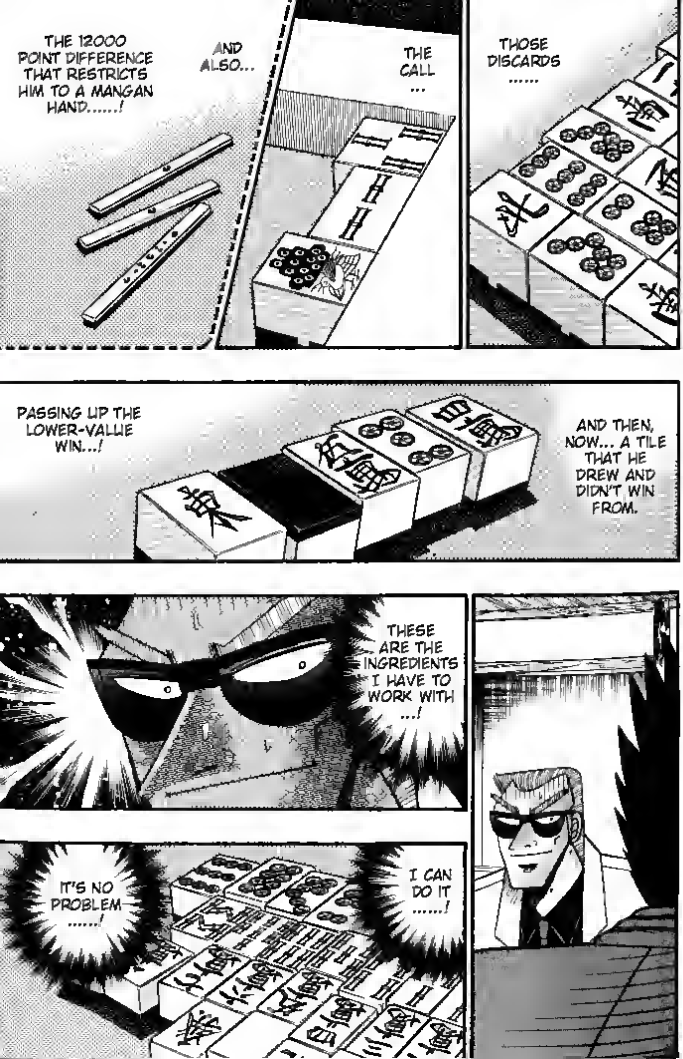
WITH THAT FIRST WINNING TILE
AT THE POINT IN TIME WHEN HE COULDN'T MAKE IT

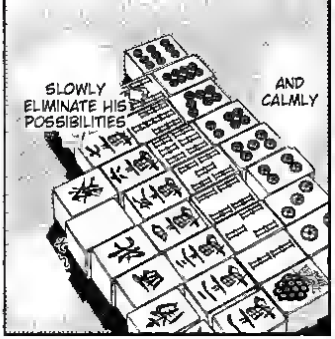
THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW!

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT.....!
HE COMPLETELY LOST HIS CHANCE...
I HAVE.....


BY PASSING ON THE LOWER VALUE WIN...
THE COMPLETED HAND THAT HE GAVE UP

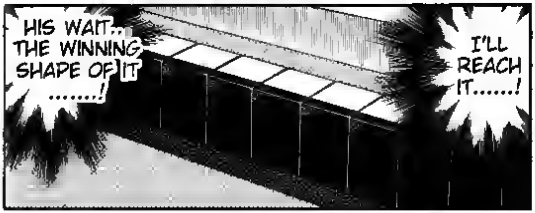
AS IF HE'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO DRAW IT NOW....!
HIS CHANCE IS ALREADY GONE...!

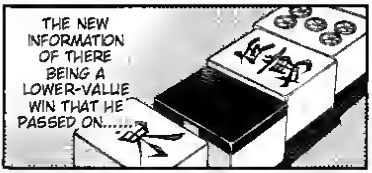

THE 12000 POINT DIFFERENCE THAT RESTRICTS HIM TO A MANGAN HAND.....!
AND ALSO...
THE CALL ...
THOSE DISCARDS .....
PASSING UP THE LOWER-VALUE WIN...!
AND THEN, NOW... A TILE THAT HE DREW AND DIDN'T WIN FROM.
THESE ARE THE INGREDIENTS I HAVE TO WORK WITH ...!
IT'S NO PROBLEM .....!
I CAN DO IT .....!


SLOWLY ELIMINATE HIS POSSIBILITIES
AND CALMLY

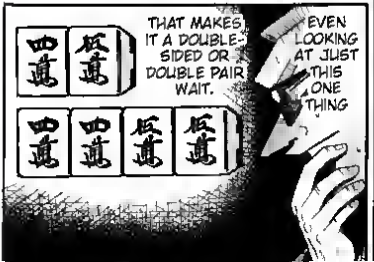
JUST TAKE YOUR TIME ...
DON'T PANIC .....

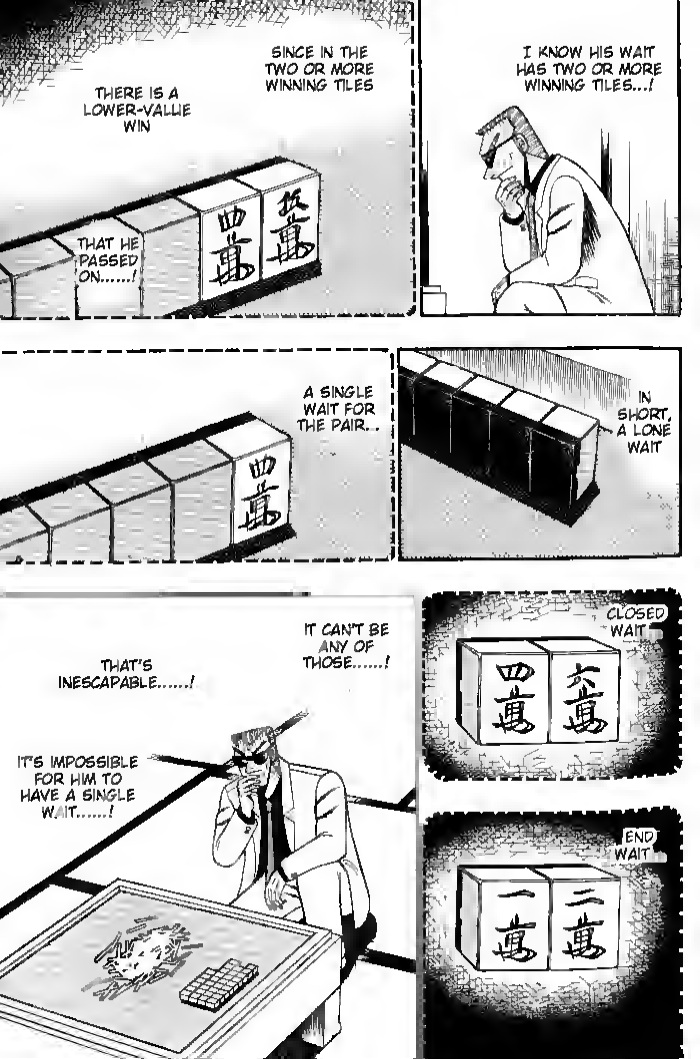
I'LL GET IT...!

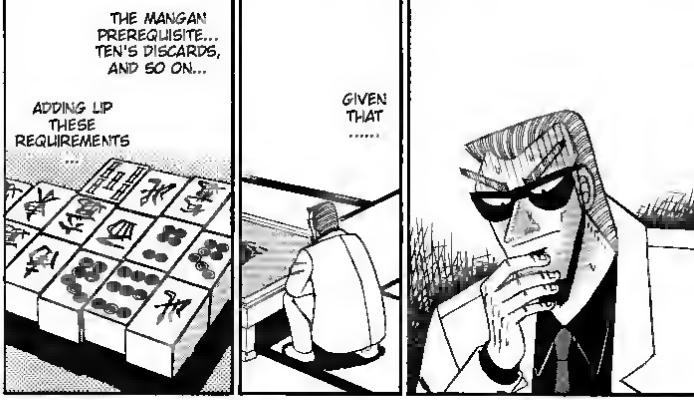

HIS WAIT... THE WINNING SHAPE OF IT .....!
I'LL REACH IT.....!


THE NEW INFORMATION OF THERE BEING A LOWER-VALUE WIN THAT HE PASSED ON.....

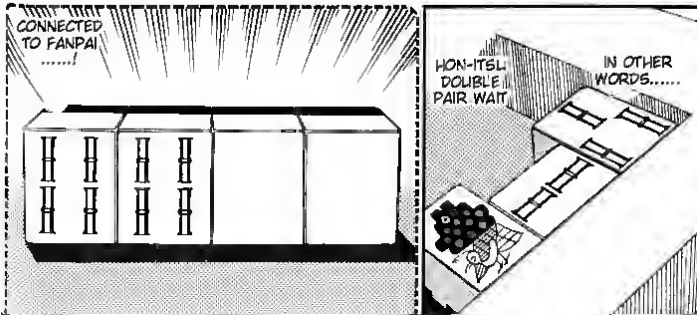
FIRST ...

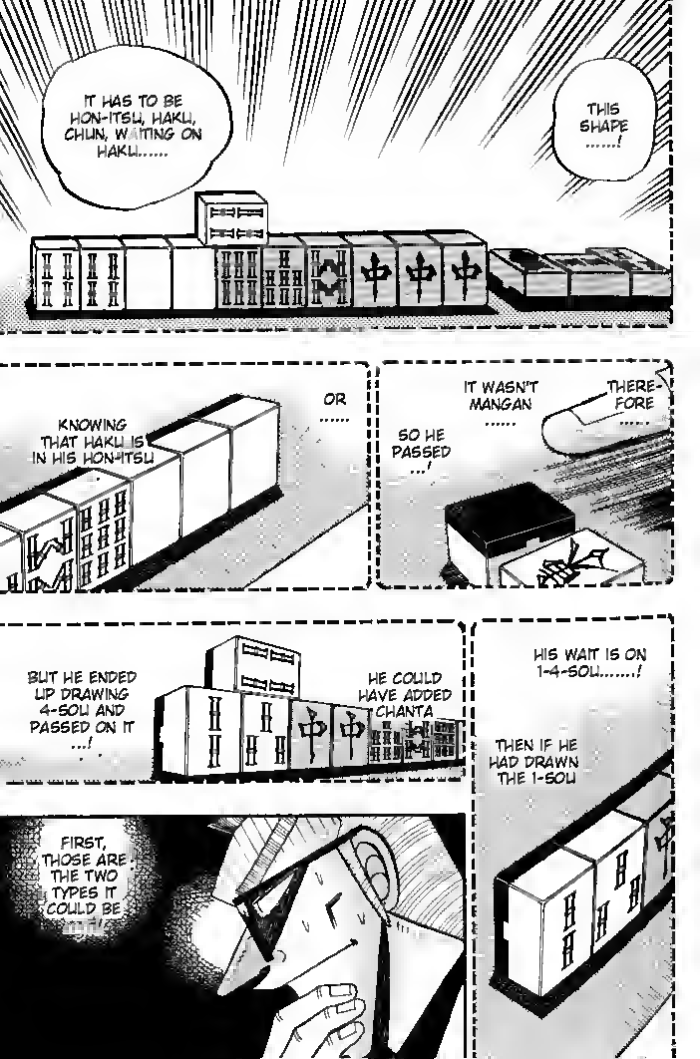

THAT MAKES IT A DOUBLE-SIDED OR DOUBLE PAIR WAIT.
EVEN LOOKING AT JUST THIS ONE THING


THERE IS A LOWER-VALUE WIN
SINCE IN THE TWO OR MORE WINNING TILES
THAT HE PASSED ON.....!
四萬
五萬
I KNOW HIS WAIT HAS TWO OR MORE WINNING TILES...!
A SINGLE WAIT FOR THE PAIR..
四萬
IN SHORT, A LONE WAIT
IT CAN'T BE ANY OF THOSE.....!
THAT'S INESCAPABLE.....!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO HAVE A SINGLE WAIT.....!
CLOSED WAIT
四萬
六萬
END WAIT
一萬
三萬


THE MANGAN PREREQUISITE... TEN'S DISCARDS, AND SO ON...
ADDING UP THESE REQUIREMENTS ...
GIVEN THAT .....

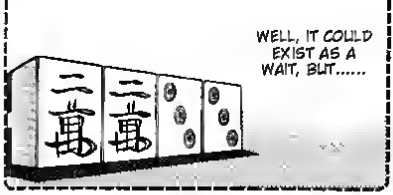
FIRST OF ALL .....
THERE ARE TWO THINGS IT COULD BE


CONNECTED TO FANPAI .....!
HON-ITSU DOUBLE PAIR WAIT
IN OTHER WORDS.....

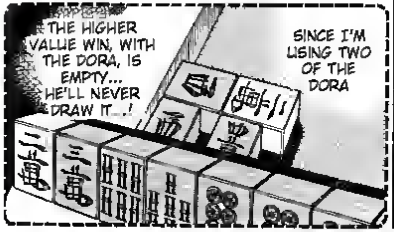

IT HAS TO BE HON-ITSU, HAKU, CHUN, WAITING ON HAKU.....
THIS SHAPE .....!
KNOWING THAT HAKU IS IN HIS HON-ITSU
OR .....
IT WASN'T MANGAN .....
THERE-FORE .....
SO HE PASSED ...!
BUT HE ENDED UP DRAWING 4-SOU AND PASSED ON IT ...!
HE COULD HAVE ADDED CHANTA
HIS WAIT IS ON 1-4-SOU.....!
THEN IF HE HAD DRAWN THE 1-SOU
FIRST, THOSE ARE THE TWO TYPES IT COULD BE

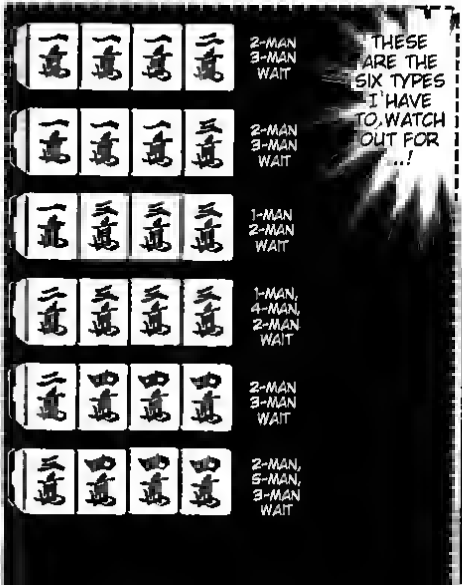
EITHER OF THOSE TWO TYPES ...!!

THE CHANCES OF THAT ARE HIGH...!
SOMETHING TIED TO THE DORA.....
THE DORA ..!
WAITING ON A DOUBLE PAIR OF THE DORA AND SOMETHING ELSE...
THE SIMPLEST EXAMPLE WOULD BE ...
THIS IS ONE CASE.....!
HE PASSED
IF HE DREW THE DORA, IT WOULD BE MANGAN, BUT SINCE HE DREW THE OTHER ONE...
BUT...


WELL, IT COULD EXIST AS A WAIT, BUT.....

FIRST OFF... IT CAN'T BE THAT.....!


THE HIGHER VALUE WIN, WITH THE DORA, IS EMPTY... HE'LL NEVER DRAW IT...!
SINCE I'M USING TWO OF THE DORA


2-MAN 3-MAN WAIT
2-MAN 3-MAN WAIT
1-MAN 2-MAN WAIT
1-MAN, 4-MAN, 2-MAN WAIT
2-MAN 3-MAN WAIT
2-MAN, 5-MAN, 3-MAN WAIT
THESE ARE THE SIX TYPES I HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR ...!

I DON'T NEED TO CONSIDER IT..... IN THE END...
IF IT'S TIED TO THE DORA IN A MULTI-SIDED WAIT

THIS SORT OF SHAPE .....!
OR.....
1-4-7-MAN 2-5-MAN WAIT
.....TEN'S DISCARDS...
IT CAN'T BE ANY OF THEM...!
I DON'T NEED TO CONSIDER THOSE
BUT ...
FURITEN .....!
1-MAN, 3-MAN AND 5-MAN SHOWING.
HAVE THE WINNING

FURITEN ISN'T ALLOWED IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG.
IF IT WASN'T .....
DETEC-TION IN STAGE B
WOULD BE AIMLESS.
IN THE END
TEN'S MULTI-SIDED WAIT IS ELIMINATED
FROM THE DORA AREA.
GONE .....!
THE MOMENT HE PASSED UP A LOWER VALUE WIN
ANY CONNEC-TION TO THE DORA VANIS-HED.
THE ONLY THING LEFT IS
WHAT WAS BROUGHT UP EARLIER ...
WELL ...

I DON'T NEED TO SELECT IT.
THIS 2-MAN IS GONE ...
IT'S VANI-SHED ...!
THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT CONNECTED TO THE DORA .....

THEN ...

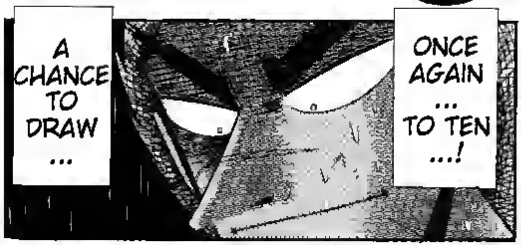
IN SHORT
CHANTA AND HON-ITSU...
WHAT REMAINS IN THE END IS...

THIS
.....!

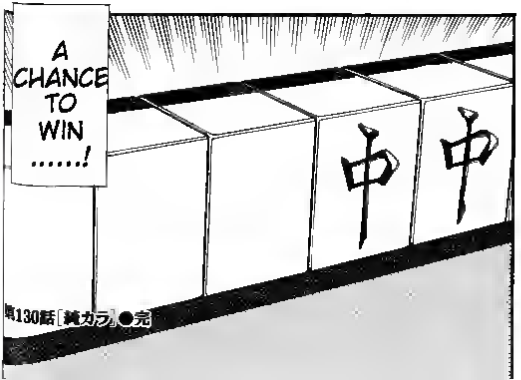
ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…
…
…
…
OR
……
THE LAST FANPAI
……
THIS ONE
…

THIS .....!?
BUT .....

NO GOOD ...!
HARADA ... WAS WRONG ...!
NOT CHUN, NOT HAKU, NOT 9-SOU, NOT 1-SOU.
NONE OF THEM ...!



IT WENT BACK …!



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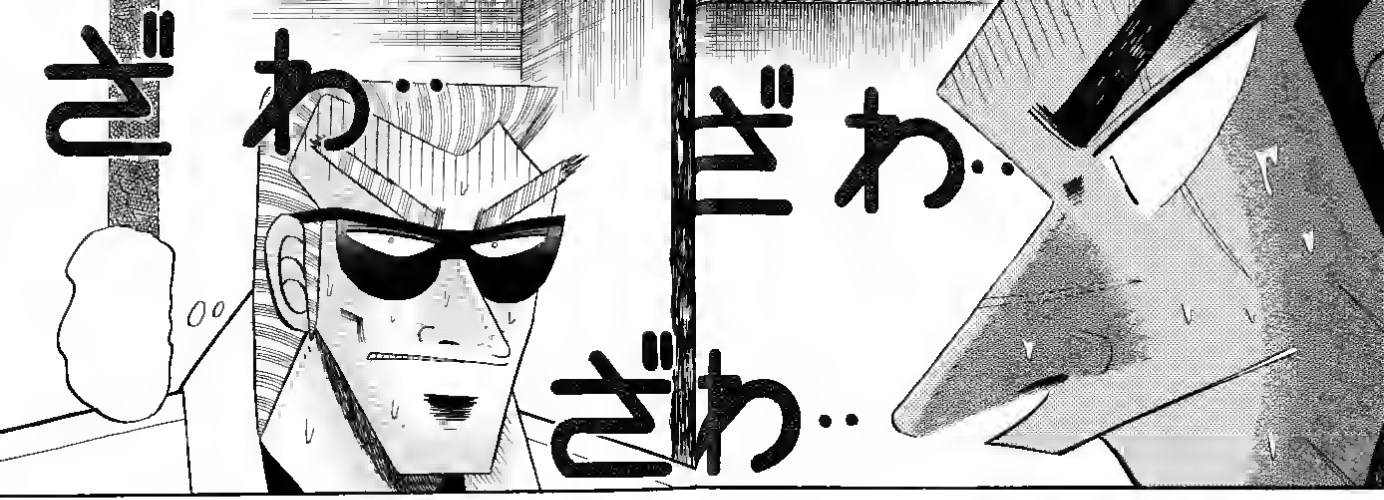
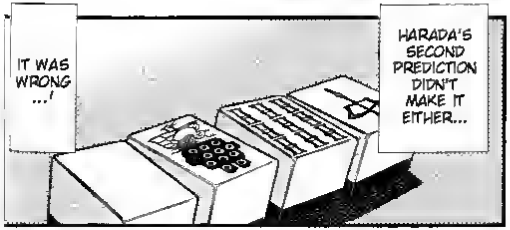
CHAPTER 131
ELIMINATE

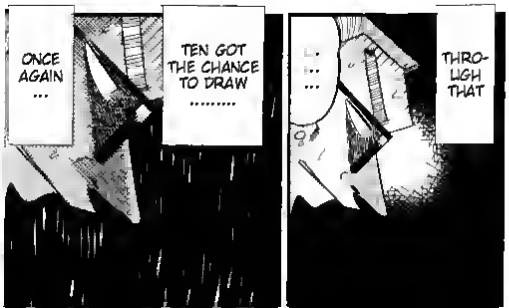

ざわ…
ざわ…

.....

THE CHANCE TO WIN COULD COME ...!

I WAS WRONG ...!


IT WAS WRONG ...!
HARADA'S SECOND PREDICTION DIDN'T MAKE IT EITHER...

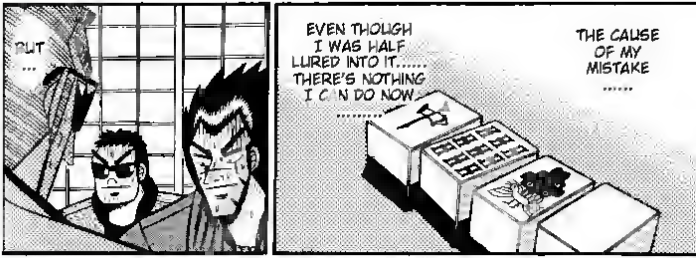

ONCE AGAIN ...
TEN GOT THE CHANCE TO DRAW .....
THRO-UGH THAT

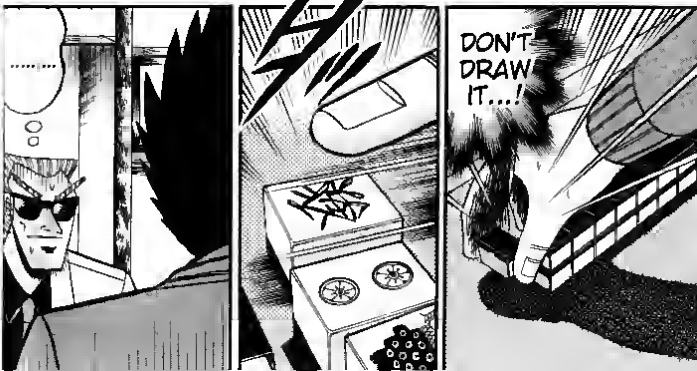
CHAOS ...!

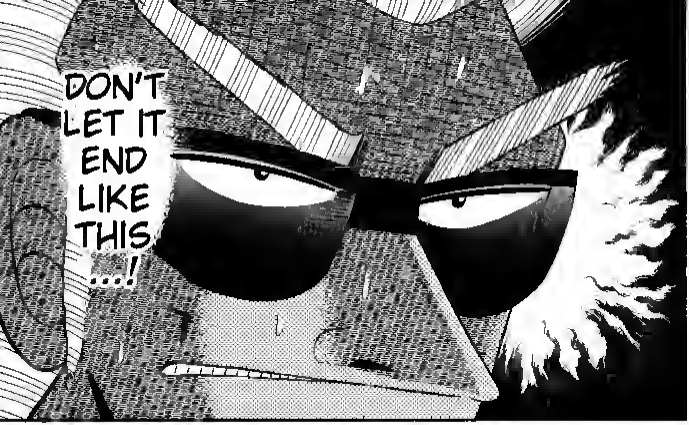
THE KEY TILES FOR CHANTA
1-SOU AND 9-SOU
THE FANPAI THAT AREN'T ANYWHERE TO BE SEEN ON THE TABLE, HAKU AND CHUN
THAT HE NEEDS TO RAISE HIS HAND ONE HAN TO GET MANGAN
MOST LIKELY TILES
THESE CERTAIN .....
THESE TICKETS TO VICTORY WERE WRONG ...!

SHIT.....!
.....
IN THE END...
I DIDN'T GET IT THE FIRST..... OR EVEN THE SECOND TIME.....!
I ENDED UP GIVING TEN A CHANCE ...!
WHAT A SCREW-UP ...!
I... CAN'T GET OVER IT...

THE WORST ....!

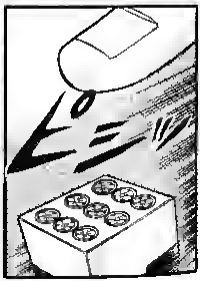

BUT ...
EVEN THOUGH I WAS HALF LURED INTO IT..... THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO NOW.....
THE CAUSE OF MY MISTAKE .....


.....
DON'T DRAW IT...!


DON'T LET IT END LIKE THIS....!

GIVE ME.....
.....WHATEVER IT TAKES, ONE MORE...

DON'T DRAW IT...!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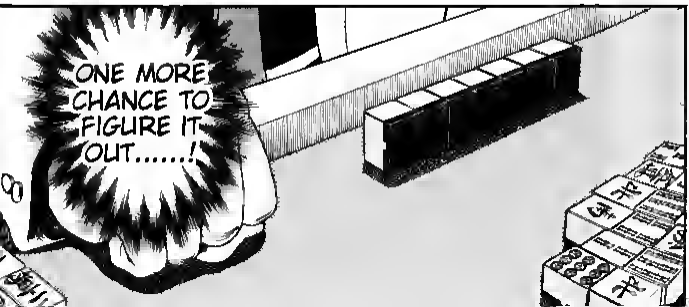
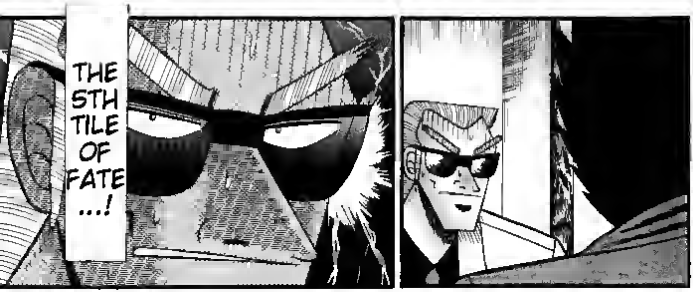

ONE MORE CHANCE TO FIGURE IT OUT.....!

TEN'S ... LAST DRAW
THE 2ND ONE ...

DRAW ...!


THE 5TH TILE OF FATE ...!

BUT ...

NO GOOD ...!

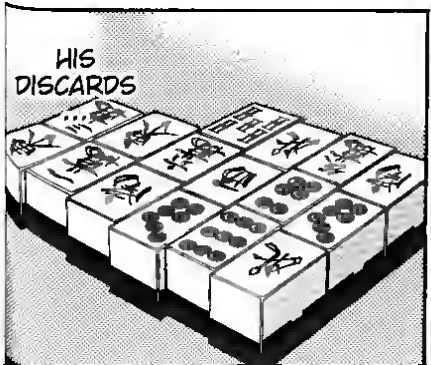
ざわ…
HE DID NOT WIN …!
GOOD……!

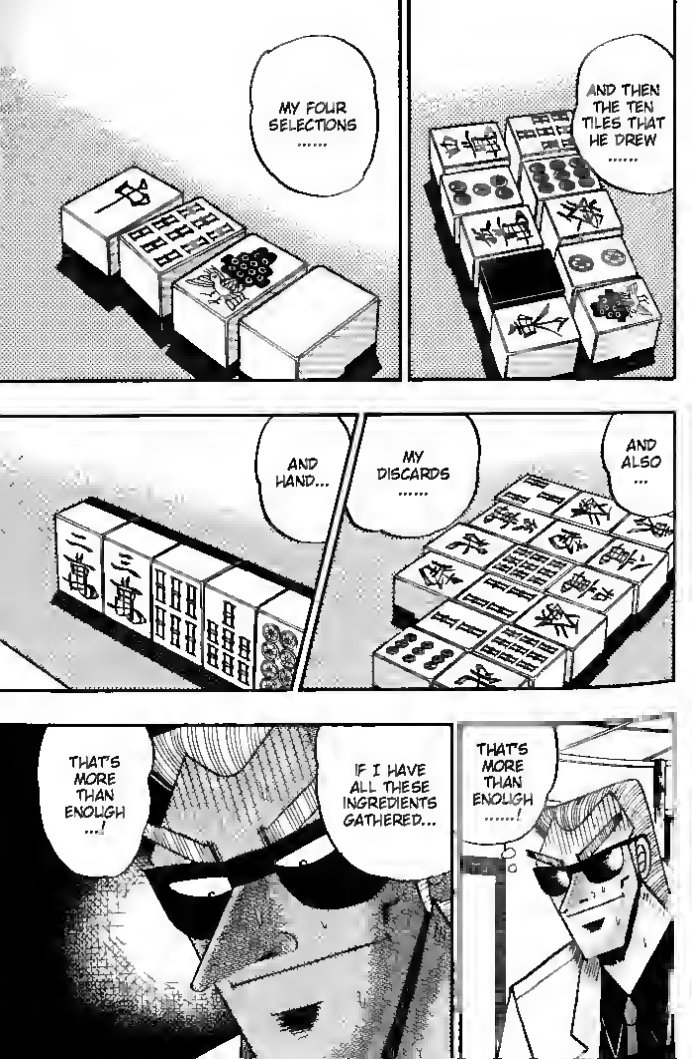
I MADE IT...!
!
A CHANCE TO DETECT HIS WAIT.....!
ONE MORE TIME.....!
IT'S MY TURN NOW.....!

..... IT'S OVER ...
HEH HEH HEH .....
ス//...
HE DOESN'T HAVE THE FLOW TO WIN .....!
NOW THAT HE CAN'T SEEM TO DRAW IT, HE'S DONE FOR.....!
ALTHOUGH THERE'S NOTHING HE COULD DO ABOUT IT, WHEN HE CAN'T MAKE A COMEBACK WITH A CHEAPER HAND.
BY DOING THAT ...
THREW AWAY HIS WINNING HAND ONCE.....!
BUT THAT'S COMPLETELY OBVIOUS THING OF ALL.....
WELL ...
HE...

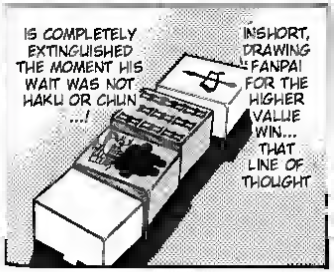
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO DRAW IT.....
ANYMORE.....!

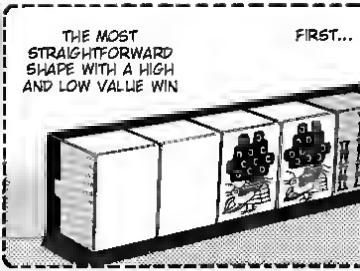
MUCH LESS THE HIGHER VALUED WIN.....!

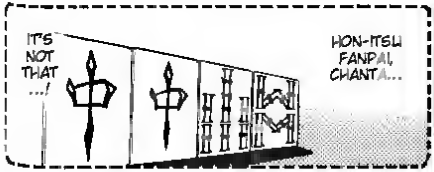

HIS DISCARDS.....

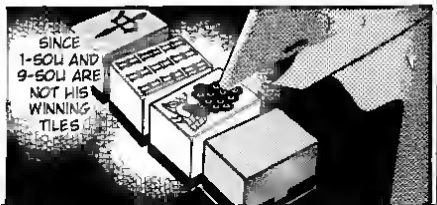

MY FOUR SELECTIONS .....
AND THEN THE TEN TILES THAT HE DREW .....
AND HAND...
MY DISCARDS .....
AND ALSO ...
THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH ...!
IF I HAVE ALL THESE INGREDIENTS GATHERED...
THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH .....!

HIS HAND.....
WILL RISE.....!

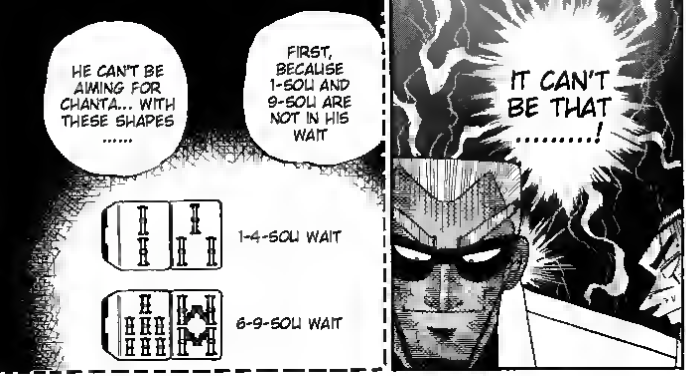

IS COMPLETELY EXTINGUISHED THE MOMENT HIS WAIT WAS NOT HAKU OR CHUN ...!
IN SHORT, DRAWING "FANPAI FOR THE HIGHER VALUE WIN... THAT LINE OF THOUGHT

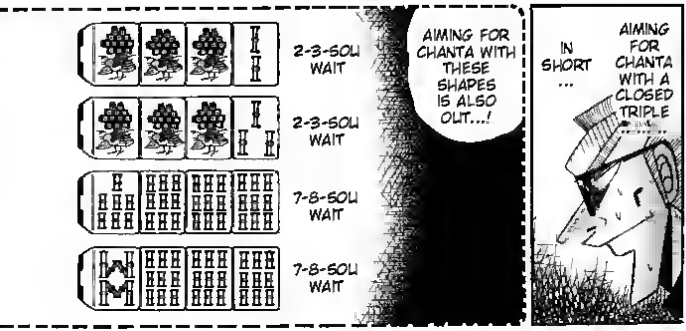

THE MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD SHAPE WITH A HIGH AND LOW VALUE WIN
FIRST...

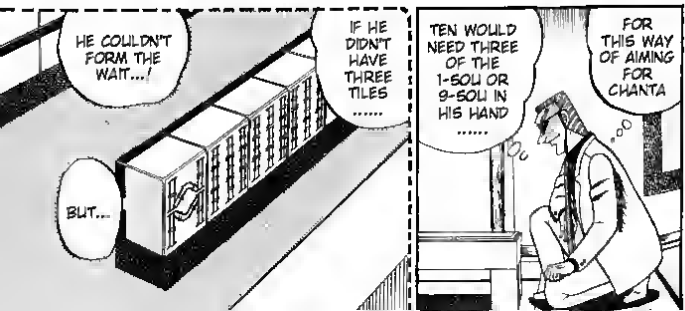

IT'S NOT THAT ...!
HON-ITSU FANPAI CHANTA...


SINCE 1-SOU AND 9-SOU ARE NOT HIS WINNING TILES

THE NEXT MOST COMMON
AND THEN...

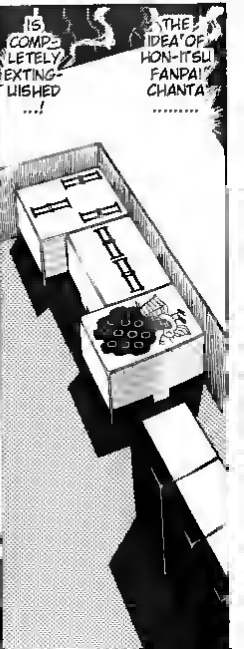

HE CAN'T BE AIMING FOR CHANTA... WITH THESE SHAPES .....
FIRST, BECAUSE 1-SOU AND 9-SOU ARE NOT IN HIS WAIT
1-4-SOU WAIT
6-9-SOU WAIT
IT CAN'T BE THAT .....!


2-3-SOU WAIT
2-3-SOU WAIT
7-8-SOU WAIT
7-8-SOU WAIT
AIMING FOR CHANTA WITH THESE SHAPES IS ALSO OUT...!
IN SHORT ...
AIMING FOR CHANTA WITH A CLOSED TRIPLE .....


HE COULDN'T FORM THE WAIT...!
IF HE DIDN'T HAVE THREE TILES .....
BUT...
TEN WOULD NEED THREE OF THE 1-SOU OR 9-SOU IN HIS HAND .....
FOR THIS WAY OF AIMING FOR CHANTA

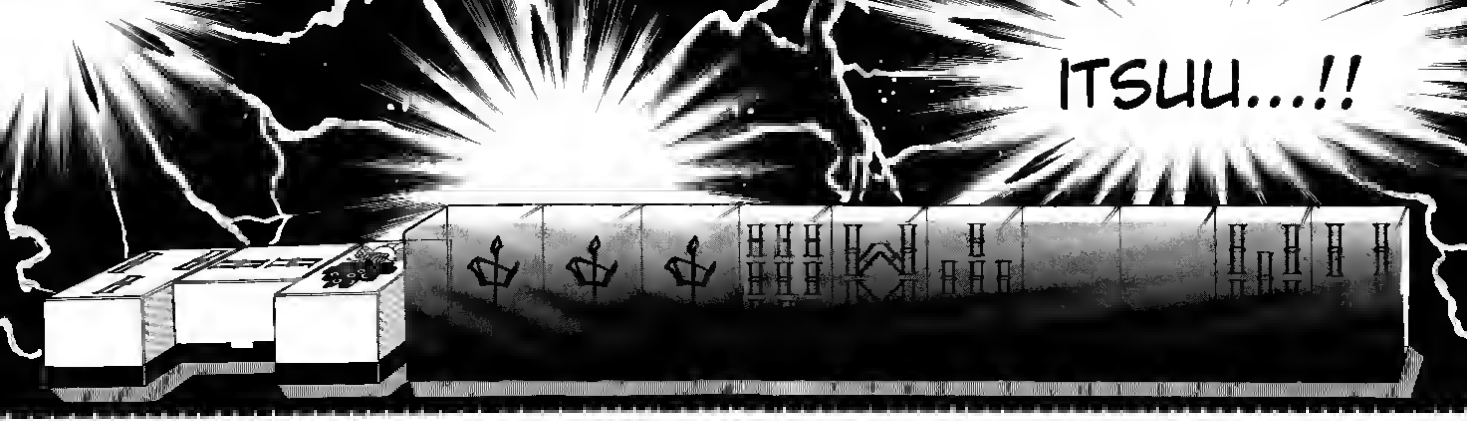
ALSO...
ONE...
IS IN HIS OPEN TILE GROUP.
THE 1-SOU
ONE OF HIS EARLIER USELESS DRAWS WAS 1-SOU.
TOTAL TWO ...!
THE 9-SOU TOO...
IS ALREADY GONE ...!
THE LINE OF THOUGHT THAT HE HAS THREE
IT WON'T BE THAT EITHER...!
THERE ARE TWO IN HIS DISCARDS .....!
SO THEN ...

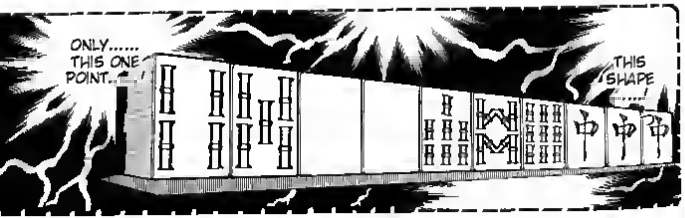
NOW ...
WHAT'S LEFT IS.....

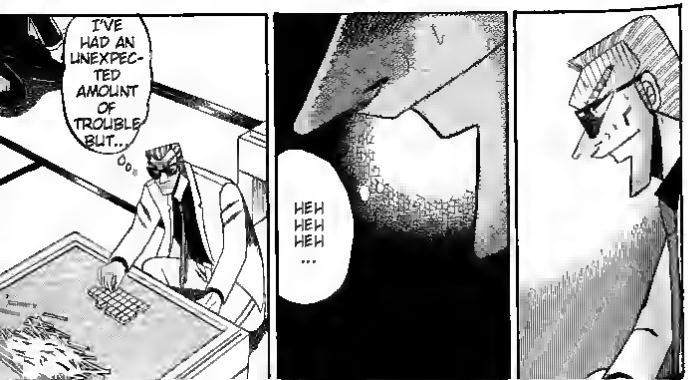

IS COMP-LETELY EXTING-UISHED ...!
THE IDEA OF HON-ITSU FANPA! CHANTA .....

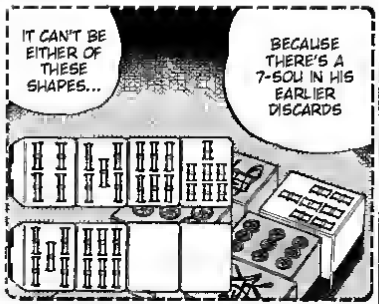
THIS SHAPE ...!

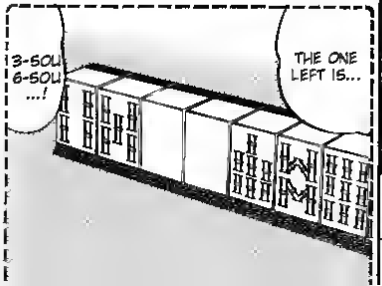
THERE'S ONLY ONE OPTION ...!
IF IT'S CONNECTED TO HON-ITSU ...


ITSUU...!!


ONLY..... THIS ONE POINT...!
THIS SHAPE.....!

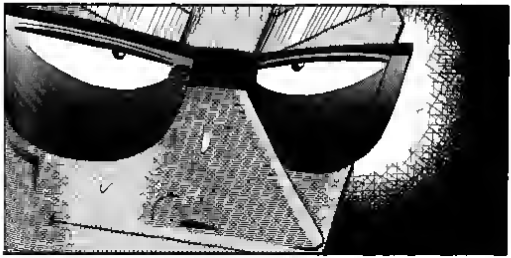

I'VE HAD AN UNEXPECTED AMOUNT OF TROUBLE BUT...
HEH HEH HEH...

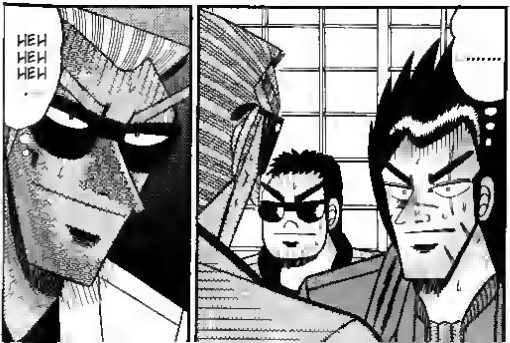

IT CAN'T BE EITHER OF THESE SHAPES...
BECAUSE THERE'S A 7-SOU IN HIS EARLIER DISCARDS


3-SOU 6-SOU ...!
THE ONE LEFT IS...

JUST ITSUU ...!

NOW ... THAT'S OVER ...!

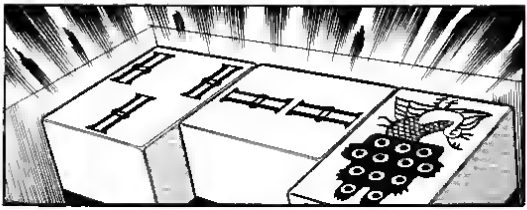




THIS IS IT .....!
BLIT .....

TEN... DIDN'T MOVE ...!
IT WAS NOT ITSUU EITHER ...!
IT WAS NOT 6-SOU ...!
?.....
NO ...!!

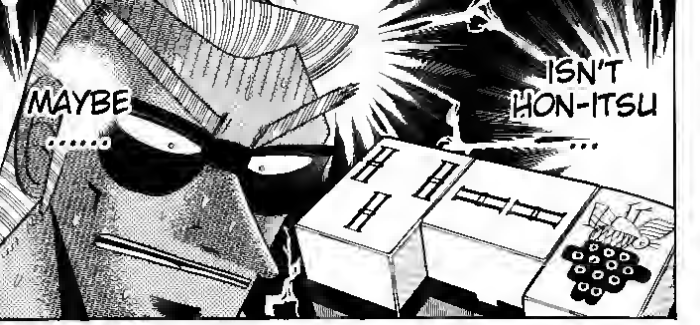
GH...!
THAT'S THE ONLY...
IF IT'S HON-ITSUI .....
ITSUI IS THE ONLY THING IT COULD BE ...!
THAT'S CRAZY ...!

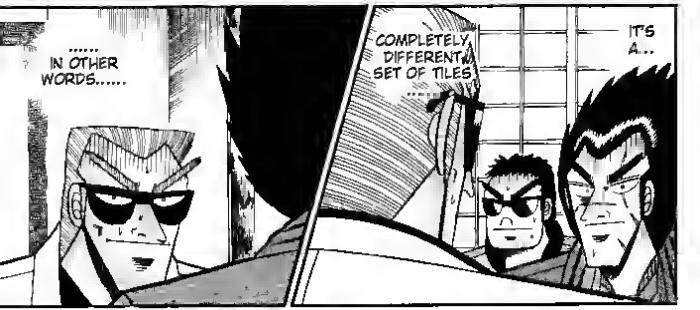


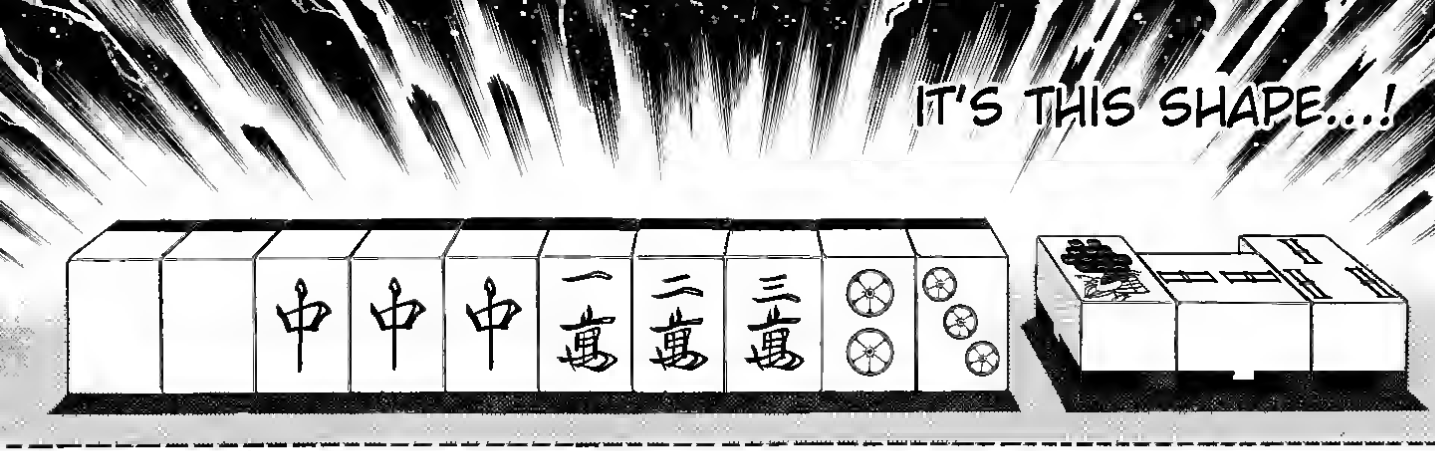
WAIT
...!

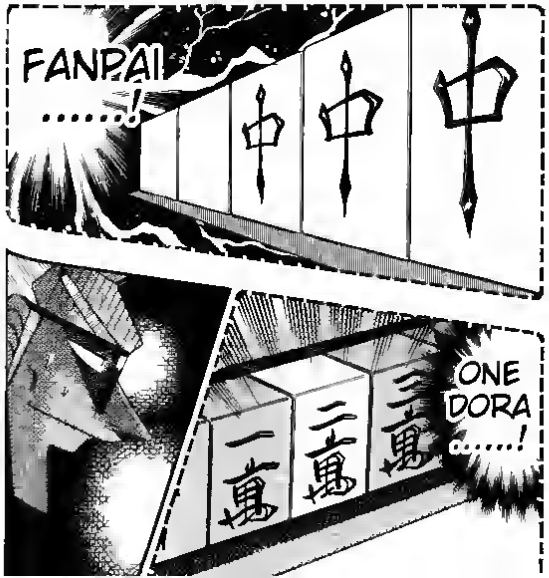
HE ...!
CHAPTER 132
LEFTOVER TILES

THAT CALL ...
THE YAKU THAT ANYONE WOULD PICTURE FROM THOSE DISCARDS.....


MAYBE.....
ISN'T HON-ITSU...


.....
IN OTHER WORDS.....
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SET OF TILES.....
IT'S A...

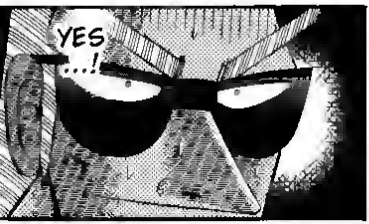


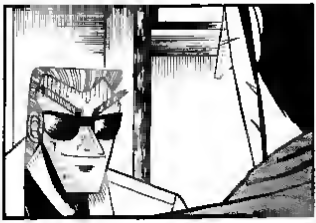


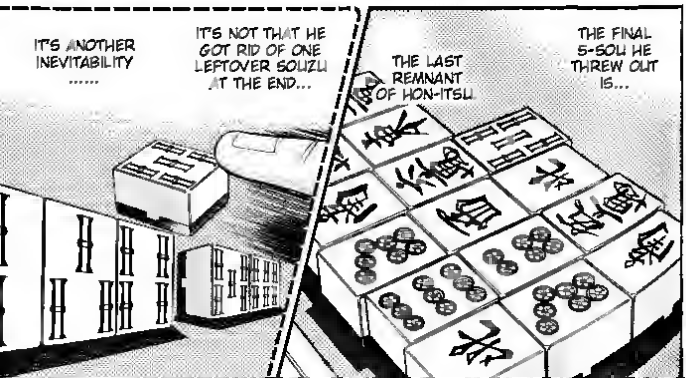
CHANTA...!

THAT'S MANGAN.....!

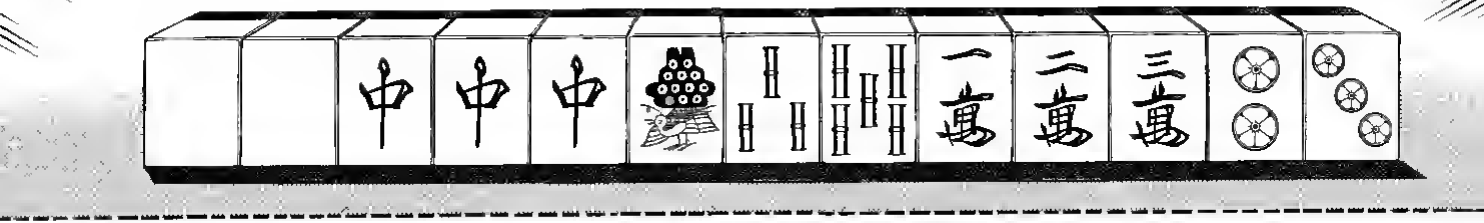
さわ…

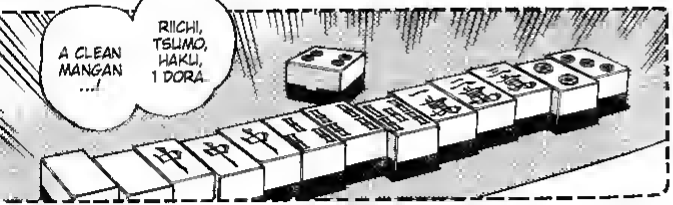

YES
…!

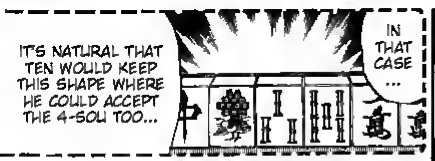


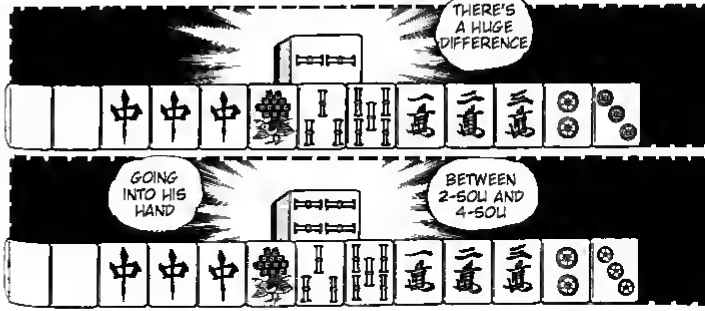

IT'S ANOTHER INEVITABILITY
……
IT'S NOT THAT HE GOT RID OF ONE LEFTOVER SOUZU AT THE END…
THE LAST REMNANT OF HON-ITSU
THE FINAL 5-SOU HE THREW OUT IS…

A LEFTOVER TILE FROM THIS SHAPE...!





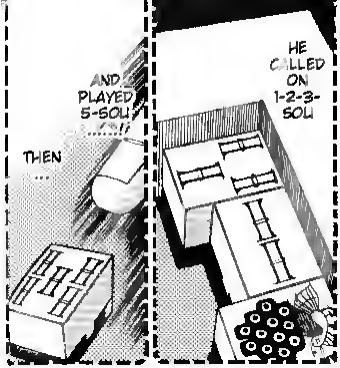


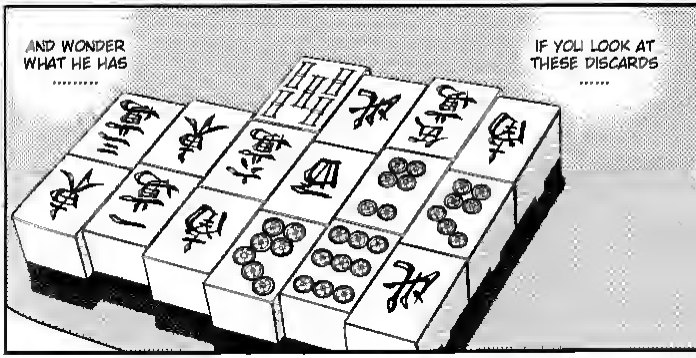


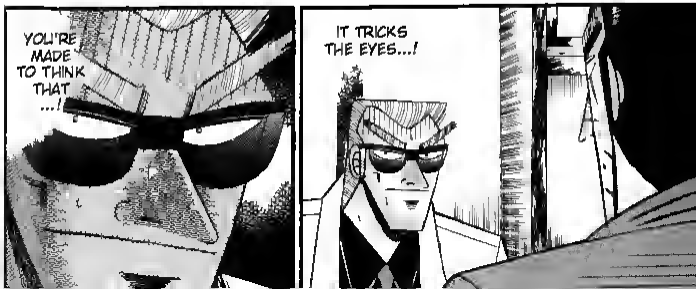
EVEN IF HE DREW 4-SOU HE COULD DECLARE RIICHI
BECAUSE HE'D BE SURE TO TSUMO IF HE WON WITH A CLOSED HAND
IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAH-JONG
BUT...

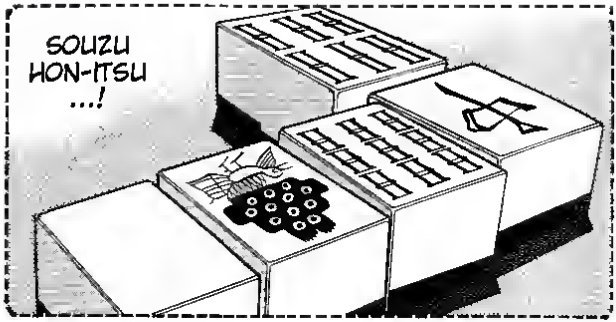
THIS IS AN IDEAL SHAPE TO RICHI ON ...!
HE DIDN'T DRAW THAT VITAL ONE TILE...
EVEN AFTER A FEW TURNS
BUT ...
AND THE KEY TILE, 2-SOU, CAME OUT
WHEN HE KEPT MAKING USELESS DRAWS...
HE MOVED .....!

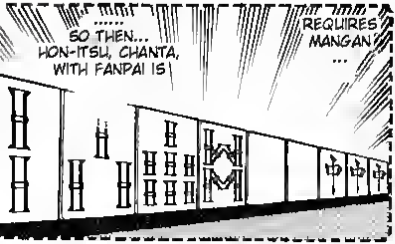
WITH THE WAY THINGS STOOD NOW, HE COULD LOSE FROM BEING IN NO-TEN .....!
- IF HE PASSED ON IT .....
THERE WERE ONLY THREE DRAWS LEFT...
HE WAS FORCED TO MOVE .....
THE CHANCES OF THAT WERE HUGE.....! WHICH MEANT ...
..... AND .....
MADE A CALL HERE...
HE GAVE UP ON TSUMO AND RIICHI, BUT...
A DIFFICULT DECISION .....!
THE ONE SIDE FOR CHANTA AND SAN-SHOKU...
ALL HE COULD BET ON WAS


AND PLAYED 5-SOU...!
THEN ...
HE CALLED ON 1-2-3-SOU
IF THERE WAS SOMETHING HE COULD ADD TO THAT CALL...
BUT .....

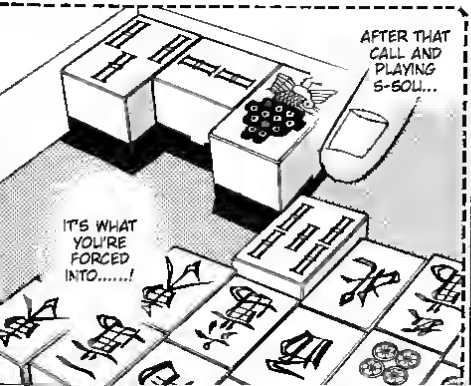

AND WONDER WHAT HE HAS .....
IF YOU LOOK AT THESE DISCARDS .....


YOU'RE MADE TO THINK THAT ...!
IT TRICKS THE EYES...!

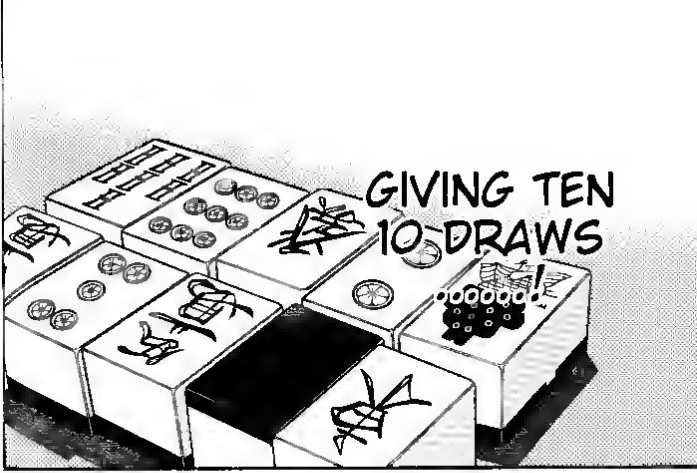

SOUZU HON-ITSU ...!


..... SO THEN... HON-ITSU, CHANTA, WITH FANPAI IS

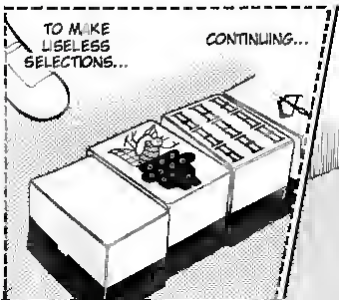
REQUIRES MANGAN? ...
BUT RIGHT NOW, TEN ....
IF HE COULD WIN WITH ANYTHING, IT'D BE DIFFERENT

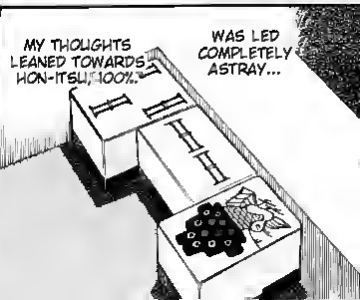

AFTER THAT CALL AND PLAYING 5-SOU...
IT'S WHAT YOU'RE FORCED INTO.....!

WHAT YOU HAVE TO AIM FOR...!

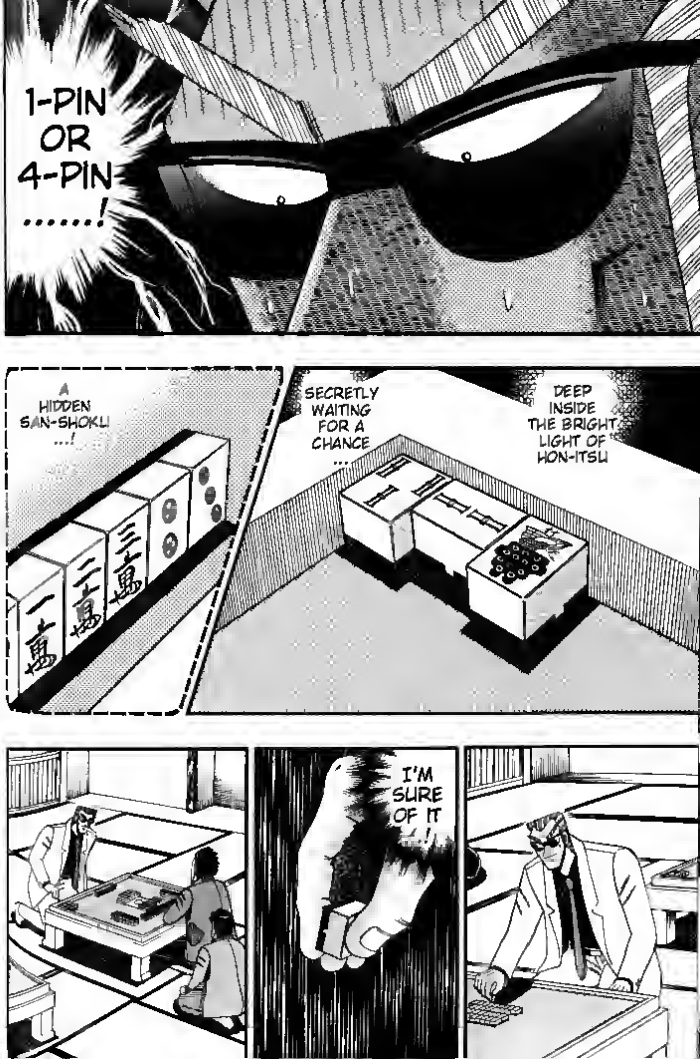

GIVING TEN
10 DRAWS
.....!

I...


TO MAKE
USELESS
SELECTIONS...
CONTINUING...


MY THOUGHTS
LEANED TOWARDS
HON-ITSU, 100%.
WAS LED
COMPLETELY
ASTRAY...

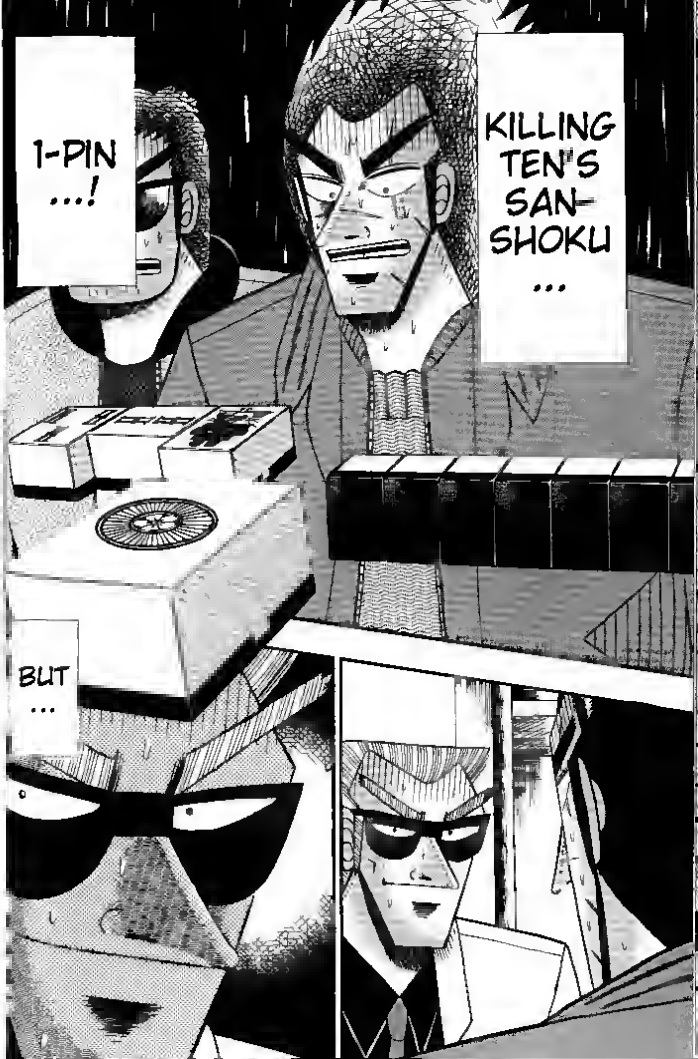
MADE TO REPEAT THEM .....!
BUT .....
IS OVER NOW .....
THAT .....
TEN'S WAIT IS...


1-PIN OR 4-PIN .....!
A HIDDEN SAN-SHOKU ...!
SECRETLY WAITING FOR A CHANCE ...
DEEP INSIDE THE BRIGHT LIGHT OF HON-ITSU
I'M SURE OF IT !

EVEN GETTING THE CHANCE TO DRAW TEN TIMES...
MY PROB-LEMS END HERE...!
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO SAY...!
HE DIDN'T DRAW IT...
IT WAS THE 4-PIN FOR THE LOWER-VALE WIN...
THE ANSWER IS
HE DID DRAW IT ONCE, BUT...
NO...

THE FLOW ISN'T WITH TEN RIGHT NOW ...!!

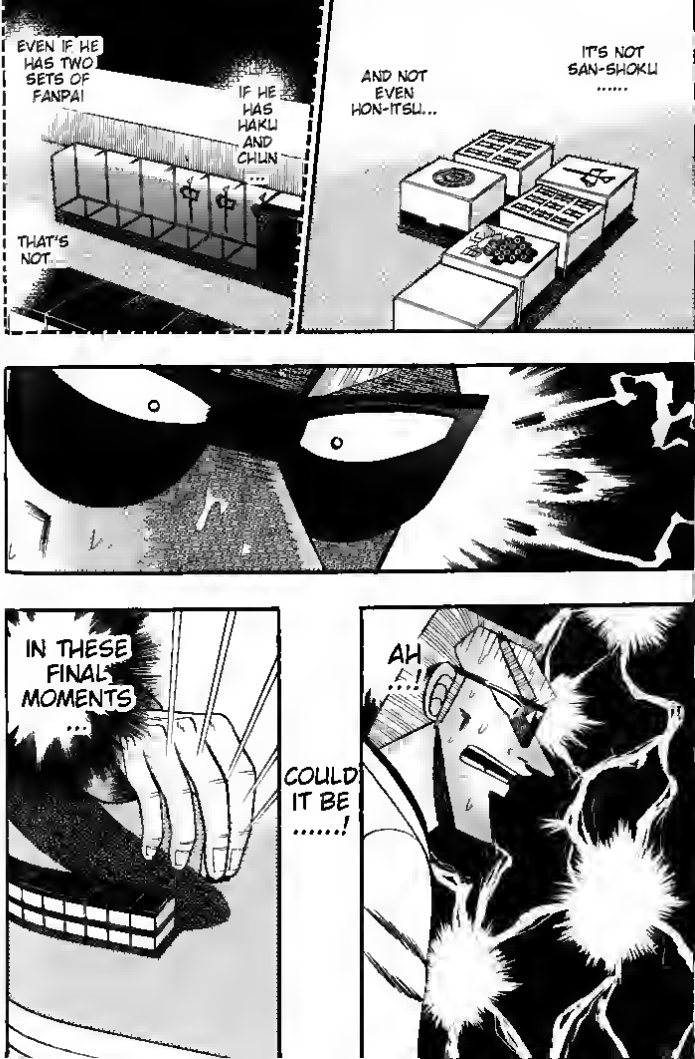
THE COUP DE GRACE.....!
HARADA
SELEC-TED 1-PIN ...!


1-PIN ...!
KILLING TEN'S SAN-SHOKU ...
BUT ...

HE DIDN'T HAVE IT .....!
TEN DIDN'T HAVE SAN-SHOKU EITHER...!

THAT'S CRAZY .....!
TH...
...
...
...
ス///...
WHAT ...!?
WHAT IS HE...
THEN ...
THEN ...

WHAT IS HE WAITING ON.....?
WHAT... DOES HE HAVE.....?
AND... WHAT THE HELL...


EVEN IF HE HAS TWO SETS OF FANPAI
IF HE HAS HAKU AND CHUN ...
THAT'S NOT...
AND NOT EVEN HON-ITSU...
IT'S NOT SAN-SHOKU .....
IN THESE FINAL MOMENTS ...
COULD IT BE .....!
AH &!

HE BUILT IT UP...? ONE MORE CLOSED TRIPLE .....
AT THE VERY VERY END ...
IN SHORT ...

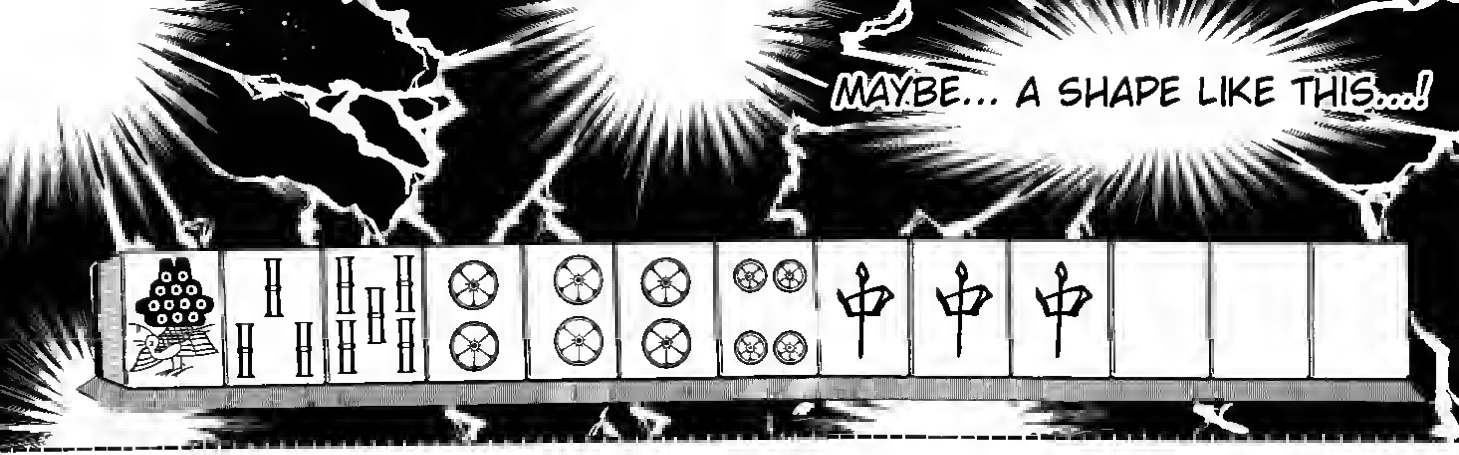
SAN-
AN-
KOU
.....!

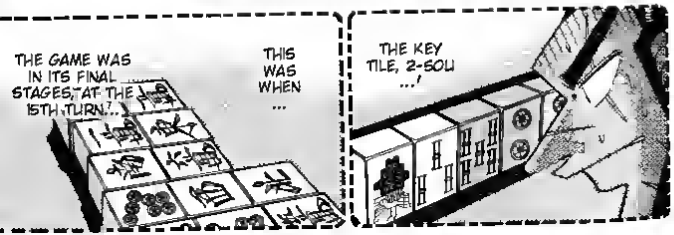
HAKU,
CHUN,
SAN-AN-KOU
...!

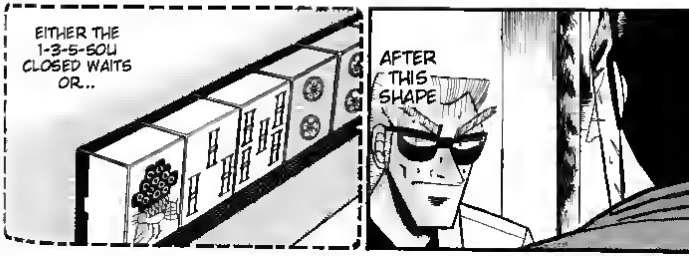
天
CHAPTER 133
TILE LOGIC
ざわ
TEN...
OTHER THAN THIS...!
THERE'S NO WAY TO REACH MANGAN FOR A COMEBACK
I'M SURE OF IT.....!
HAS HAKU, CHUN, SAN-AN-KOU ...!
ISN'T SAN-SHOKU OF EVEN HON-ITSU...
RIGHT NOW, HIS 4-HAN MANGAN...

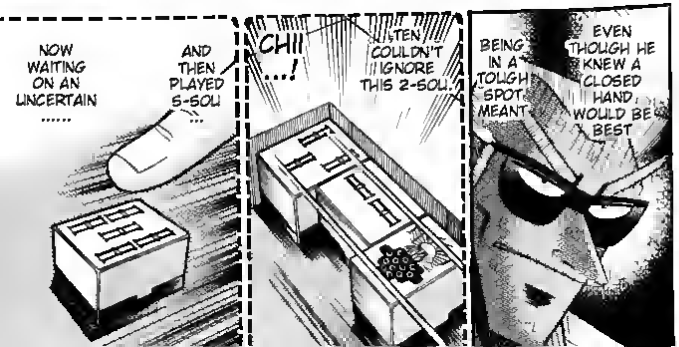
WHAT AMAZING LUCK...
SHIT ...!
THAT'S NOT AN EASY THING TO GET ...!
SAN-AN-KOU ...

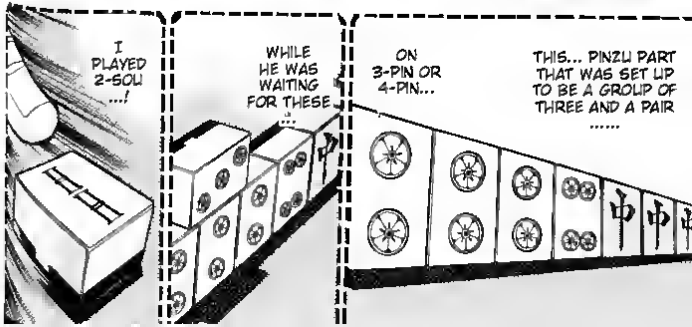
AT THE VERY END.....
IS THAT WHAT HE GOT.....!?
中 中 中
IN THE END.....
WHEN THE CURTAIN IS ABOUT TO FALL.....!
NOW...
BEFORE THAT INSTANT, HIS HAND WAS...
THAT FINAL MOMENT WHEN TEN CALLED ON 2-SOU AND PLAYED 5-SOU...!

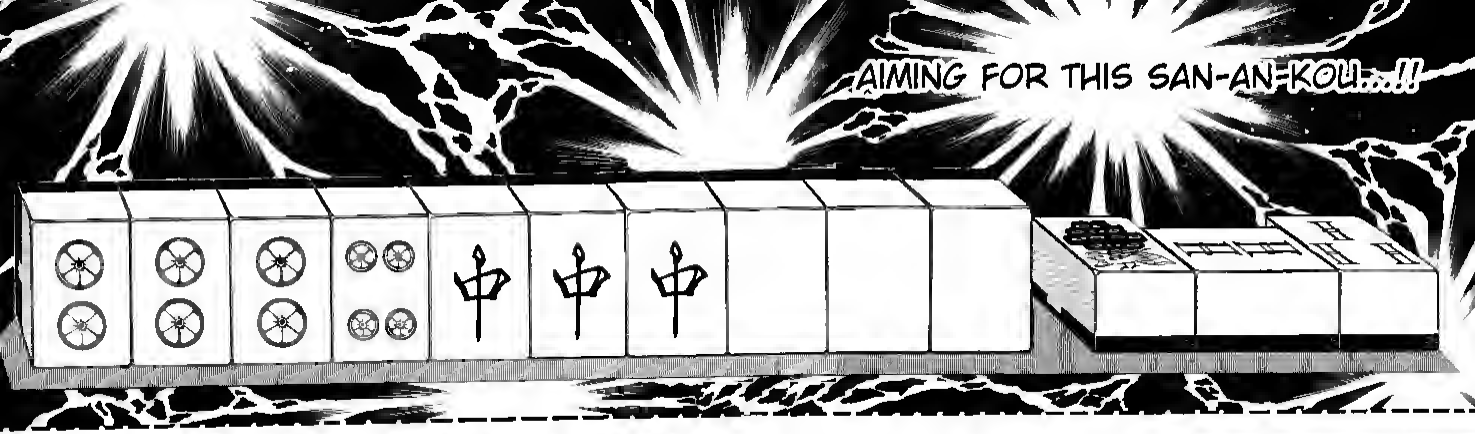

MAYBE... A SHAPE LIKE THIS...!

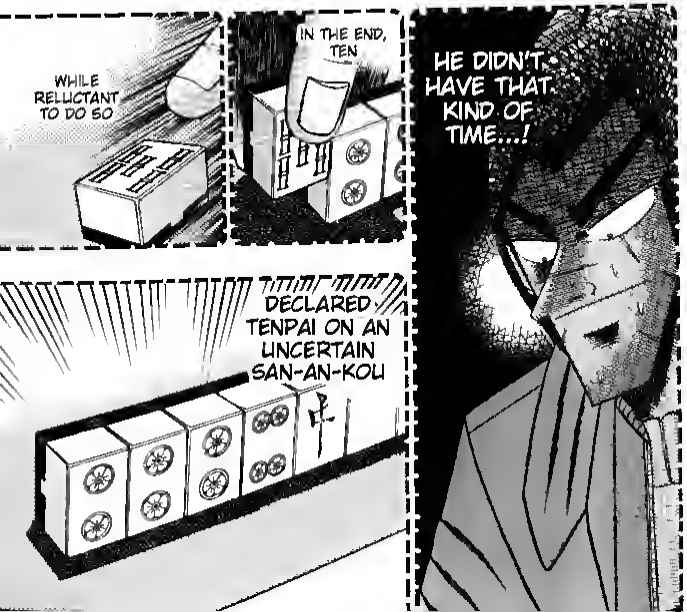

THE GAME WAS IN ITS FINAL STAGES, AT THE 15TH TURN...
THIS WAS WHEN ...
THE KEY TILE, 2-SOU ...!

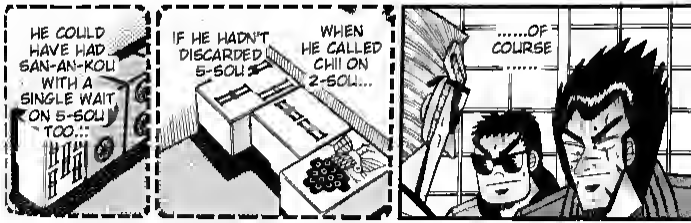

EITHER THE 1-3-5-SOU CLOSED WAITS OR...
AFTER THIS SHAPE

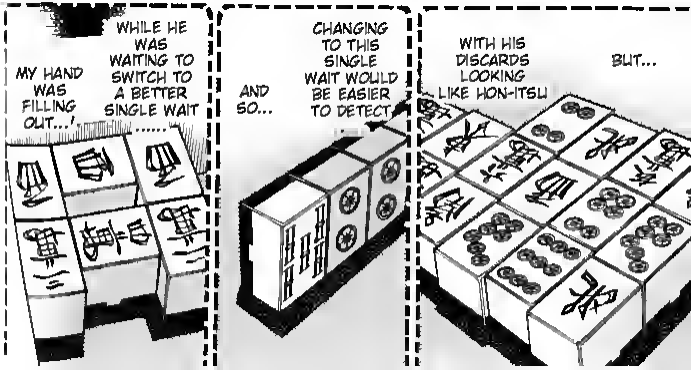

NOW WAITING ON AN UNCERTAIN .....
AND THEN PLAYED 5-SOU ...
CHI! ...!
TEN COULDN'T IGNORE THIS 2-SOU...
BEING IN A TOUGH SPOT MEANT
EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW A CLOSED HAND WOULD BE BEST

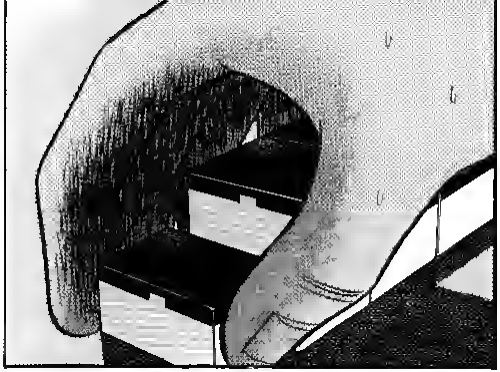

I PLAYED 2-SOU ...!
WHILE HE WAS WAITING FOR THESE ...
ON 3-PIN OR 4-PIN...
THIS... PINZU PART THAT WAS SET UP TO BE A GROUP OF THREE AND A PAIR .....


AIMING FOR THIS SAN-AN-KOU...!!

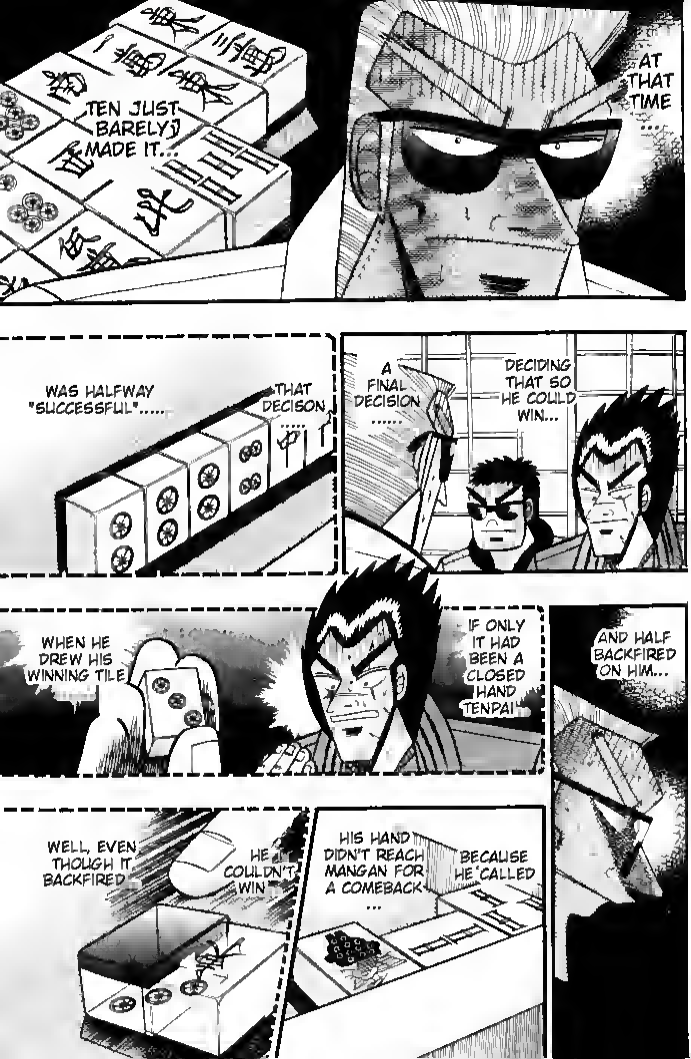

WHILE RELUCTANT TO DO SO
IN THE END, TEN
DECLARED TENPAI ON AN UNCERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU
HE DIDN'T HAVE THAT KIND OF TIME...!


HE COULD HAVE HAD SAN-AN-KOU WITH A SINGLE WAIT ON 5-SOU TOO...!
IF HE HADN'T DISCARDED 5-SOU
WHEN HE CALLED CHII ON 2-SOU...
.....OF COURSE.....


MY HAND WAS FILLING OUT...!
WHILE HE WAS WAITING TO SWITCH TO A BETTER SINGLE WAIT.....
AND SO...
CHANGING TO THIS SINGLE WAIT WOULD BE EASIER TO DETECT
WITH HIS DISCARDS LOOKING LIKE HON-ITSU
BUT...



HE WAS FORCED TO DECLARE ...!


TEN JUST BARELY MADE IT...
AT THAT TIME ...
WAS HALFWAY "SUCCESSFUL"...
THAT DECISON ...
A FINAL DECISION ...
DECIDING THAT SO HE COULD WIN...
WHEN HE DREW HIS WINNING TILE
IF ONLY IT HAD BEEN A CLOSED HAND TENPAI
AND HALF BACKFIRED ON HIM...
WELL, EVEN THOUGH IT BACKFIRED
HE COULDN'T WIN
HIS HAND DIDN'T REACH MANGAN FOR A COMEBACK ...
BECAUSE HE CALLED

THE CHANCE OF IT ROSE.
AND AFTER THAT CALL
HIS DISCARDS INDICATED HON-ITSU MOST OF ALL...
IT WAS A "SUCCESS" TOO...
I WAS FOOLED BY IT...
IT MADE HON-ITSU SEEM EVEN MORE LIKELY
.....
BUT ...
BY SHEER COINCIDENCE, A FAR HIGHER DIFFICULTY LEVEL...
I NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF SAN-AN-KOU ...!

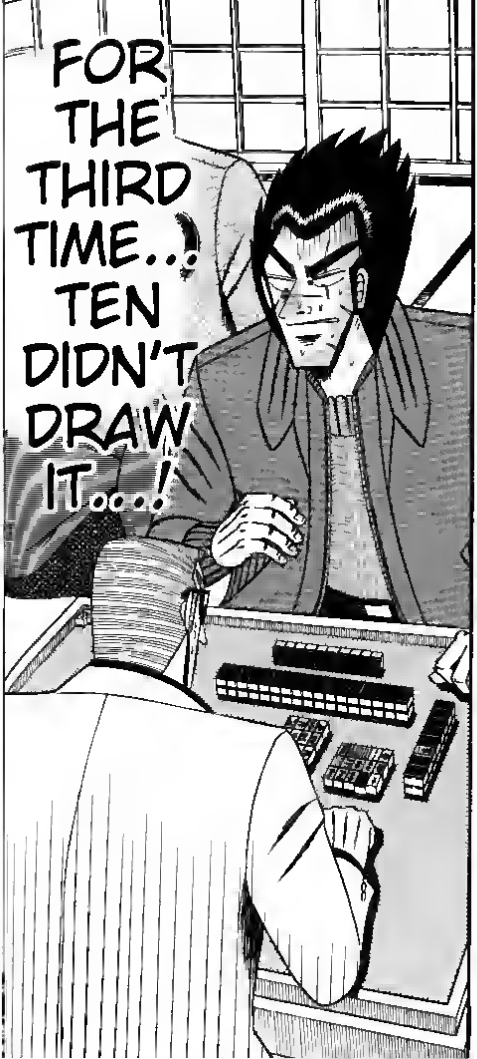
IT'S OVER ...!
ONCE IT'S KNOWN ...
SAN-AN-KOU UNDER THE ILLUSION OF HON-ITSU
...THAT "SUCCESS"
MY DISCARDS ...
TEN'S DISCARDS AND...
I HAVE THOSE HINTS...!
TEN'S UNUSED DRAWS ...
MY SELECTIONS .....
NOW... IT'S EASY TO DETECT ...!
SAN-AN-KOU ...ONCE THAT'S KNOW, IT'S OBVIOUS...

IF TEN DOESN'T DRAW IT .....

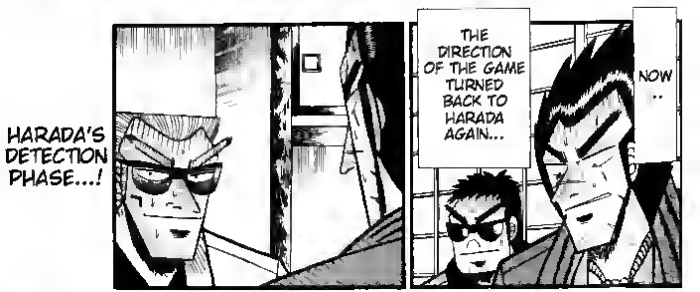
HERE AND NOW ...

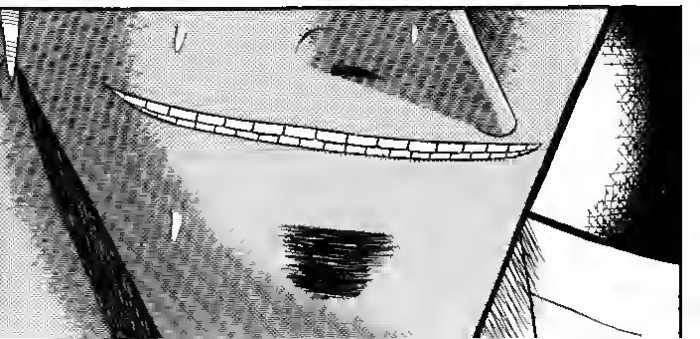
I'LL WIN ...!
I'LL WIN ...!
I'LL BREAK THROUGH IT IN MY NEXT SELECTION .....!!
IF HE DOESN'T DRAW IT...

GH
...!
...
...
...
...

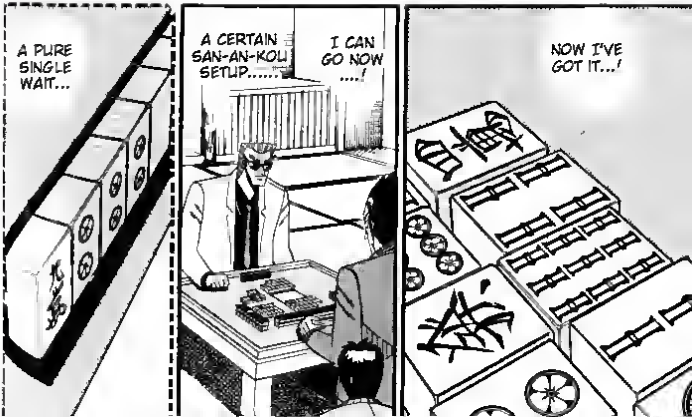

FOR THE THIRD TIME..! TEN DIDN'T DRAW IT...!
HE DIDN'T DRAW IT...!

HE DIDN'T WIN.....!

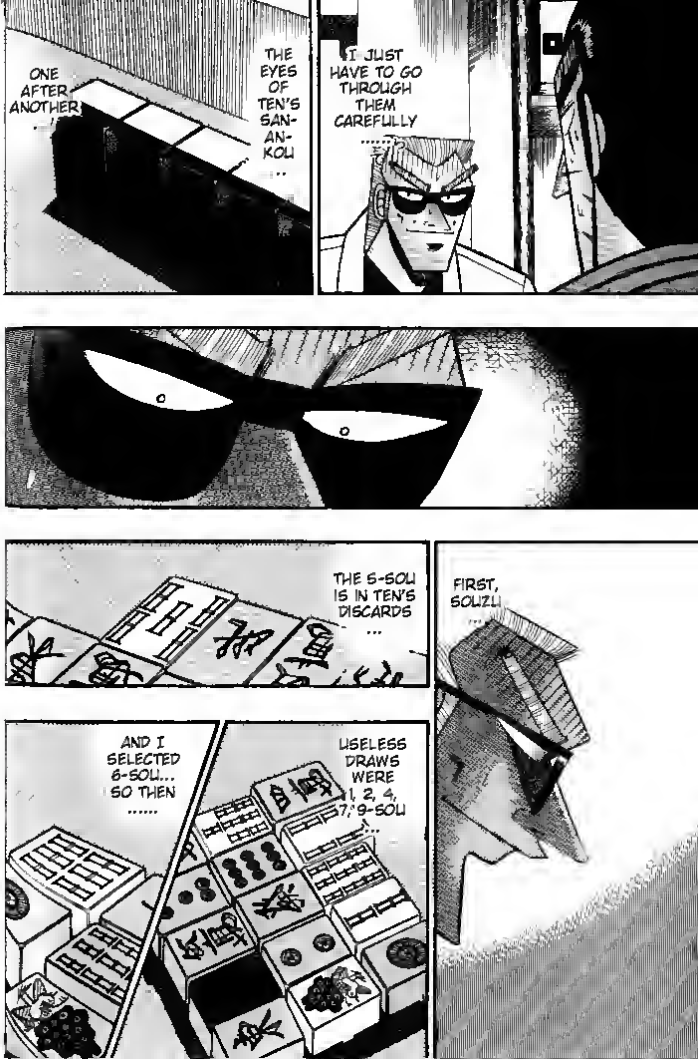

HARADA'S DETECTION PHASE...!
THE DIRECTION OF THE GAME TURNED BACK TO HARADA AGAIN...
NOW..

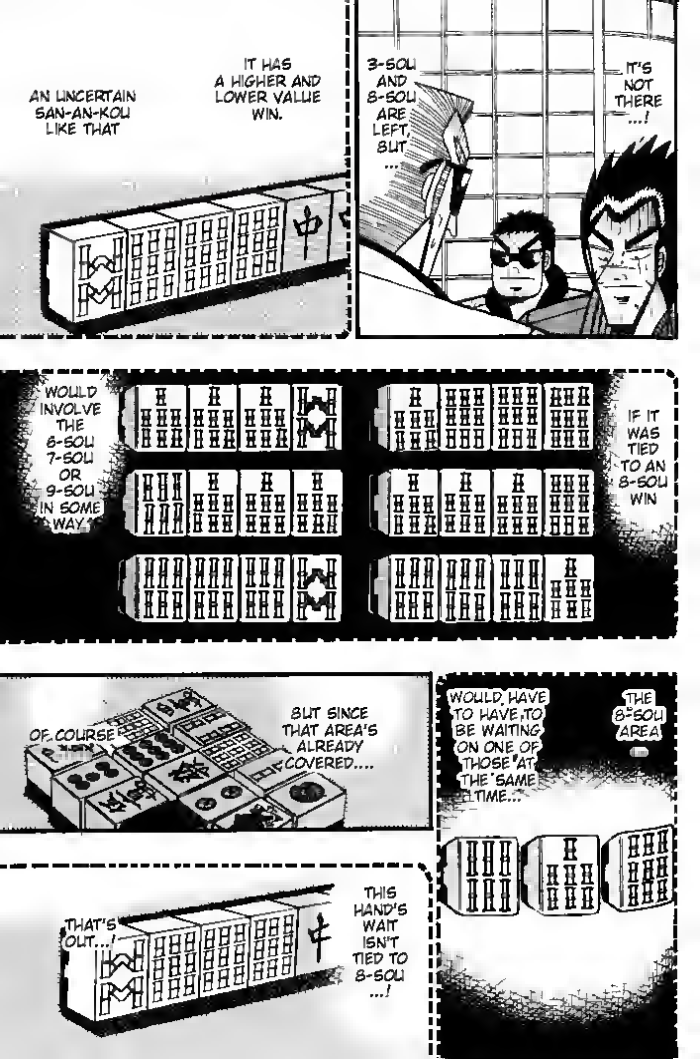


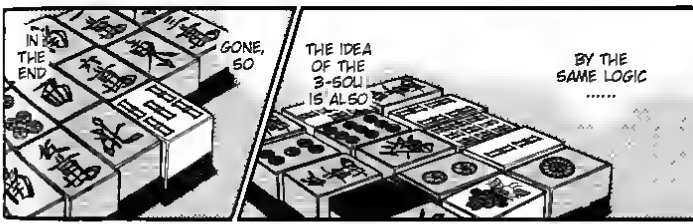
I'VE GOT IT.....!

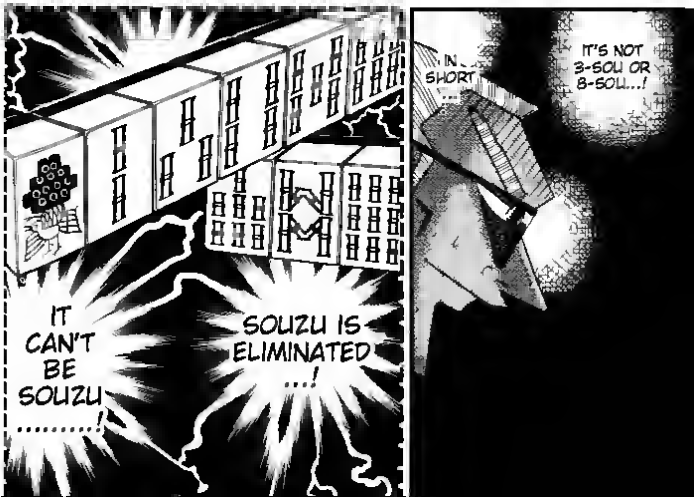

A PURE SINGLE WAIT...
A CERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU SETUP.....
I CAN GO NOW ....!
NOW I'VE GOT IT...!

THAT'S NOT HARD TO FIGURE OUT...!
THERE'S A HIGHER AND LOWER-VALUED WIN... HIS SAN-AN-KOU ISN'T SET.....
SOME INCIDENTAL ■ SINGLE WAIT WOULD BE DIFFICULT, BUT...
IT'S LIMITED ...!
LIMITED ...!
UNCERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU WAIT IS...
RIGHT NOW, TEN'S


ONE AFTER ANOTHER
THE EYES OF TEN'S SAN-AN-KOU
I JUST HAVE TO GO THROUGH THEM CAREFULLY
THE 5-SOU IS IN TEN'S DISCARDS
FIRST, SOU2!!
AND I SELECTED 6-SOU... SO THEN
USELESS DRAWS WERE 1, 2, 4, 7, 9-SOU


AN UNCERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU LIKE THAT
IT HAS A HIGHER AND LOWER VALUE WIN.
3-SOU AND 8-SOU ARE LEFT, BUT...
IT'S NOT THERE...!
WOULD INVOLVE THE 6-SOU 7-SOU OR 9-SOU IN SOME WAY.
IF IT WAS TIED TO AN 8-SOU WIN
OF COURSE
BUT SINCE THAT AREA'S ALREADY COVERED....
WOULD HAVE TO HAVE TO BE WAITING ON ONE OF THOSE AT THE SAME TIME...
THE 8-SOU AREA
THAT'S OUT...!
THIS HAND'S WAIT ISN'T TIED TO 8-SOU ...!


IN THE END
GONE, SO
THE IDEA OF THE 3-SOU IS ALSO
BY THE SAME LOGIC .....


IT CAN'T BE SOUZU .....!
SOUZU IS ELIMINATED ...!
IN SHORT ...
IT'S NOT 3-SOU OR 8-SOU...!

THOSE ARE MOSTLY GONE, TOO...
BUT ...
PINZU AND MANZU ARE LEFT, BUT .....
A BEAST CAUGHT IN A NET ...
TEN'S WAIT IS ALREADY HALF TAKEN CARE OF...
NO NEED TO BE HASTY...
TRAPPED AND UNABLE TO MOVE...

CAUGHT IN THE LOGIC OF THE TILES...!

CHAPTER 134
ONE OF TWO OPTIONS

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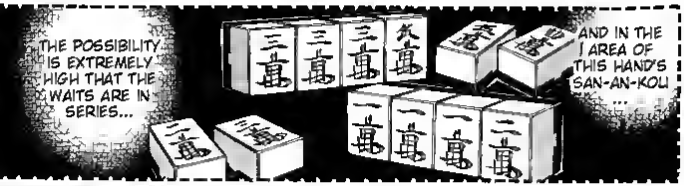
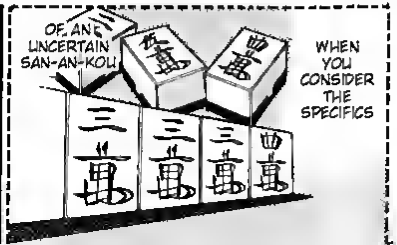
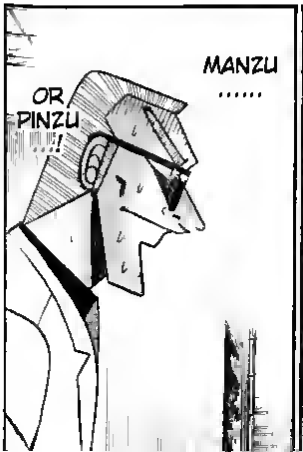
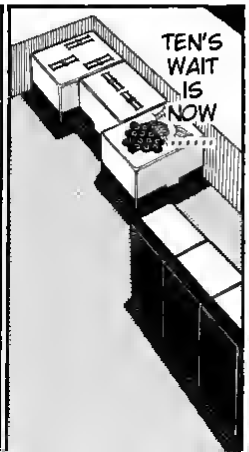

THE POSSIBILITY IS EXTREMELY HIGH THAT THE WAITS ARE IN SERIES...
AND IN THE I AREA OF THIS HAND'S SAN-AN-KOU ...

INEVITABLY
.....


OF AN UNCERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU
WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE SPECIFICS

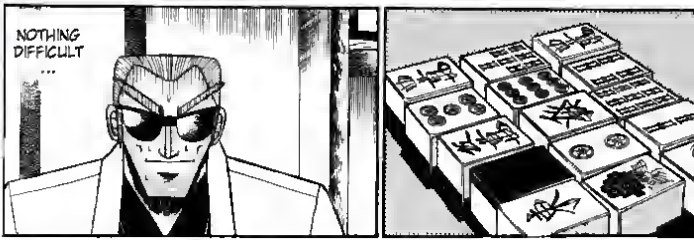

MANZU
.....
OR PINZU
...!


TEN'S WAIT IS NOW
.....

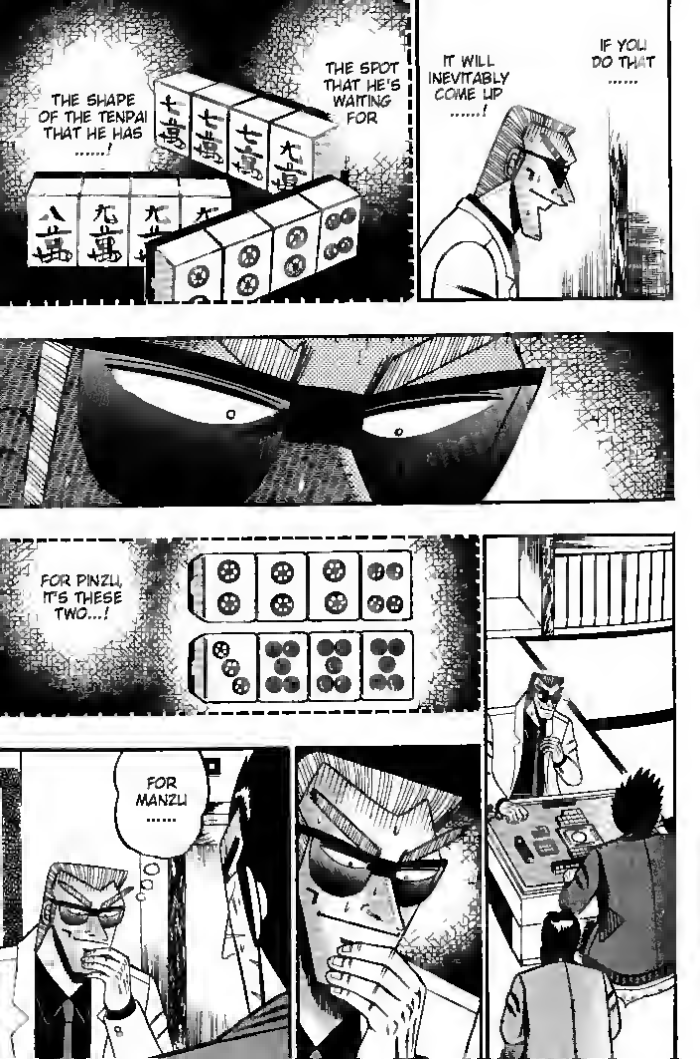
I CAN KILL IT ...!

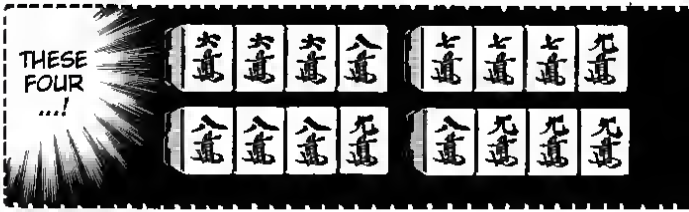
IT CAN BE NARROWED DOWN ...!
TEN'S DISCARDS .....
USELESS DRAWS .....
..... OBVIOUSLY IT HAS TO BE THAT WAY...!

WHAT'S LEFT IS...
THERE'S NO NEED TO EVEN THINK ABOUT IT... ELIMINATE WHAT CAN BE - ELIMINATED...
AT A QUICK GLANCE ...
UPPER MANZU ...!
NOTHING DIFFICULT ABOUT IT ...
ONE OF THOSE ...!
OR LOWER PINZU .....!


NOTHING DIFFICULT ...

HIS WINNING SHAPE .....!
GO AND DESTROY
JUST CAREFULLY ...
ANY AMATEUR COULD DO IT.....!


IF YOU DO THAT .....
IT WILL INEVITABLY COME UP .....!
THE SPOT THAT HE'S WAITING FOR
THE SHAPE OF THE TENPAI THAT HE HAS .....!
FOR PINZU, IT'S THESE TWO...!
FOR MANZU .....



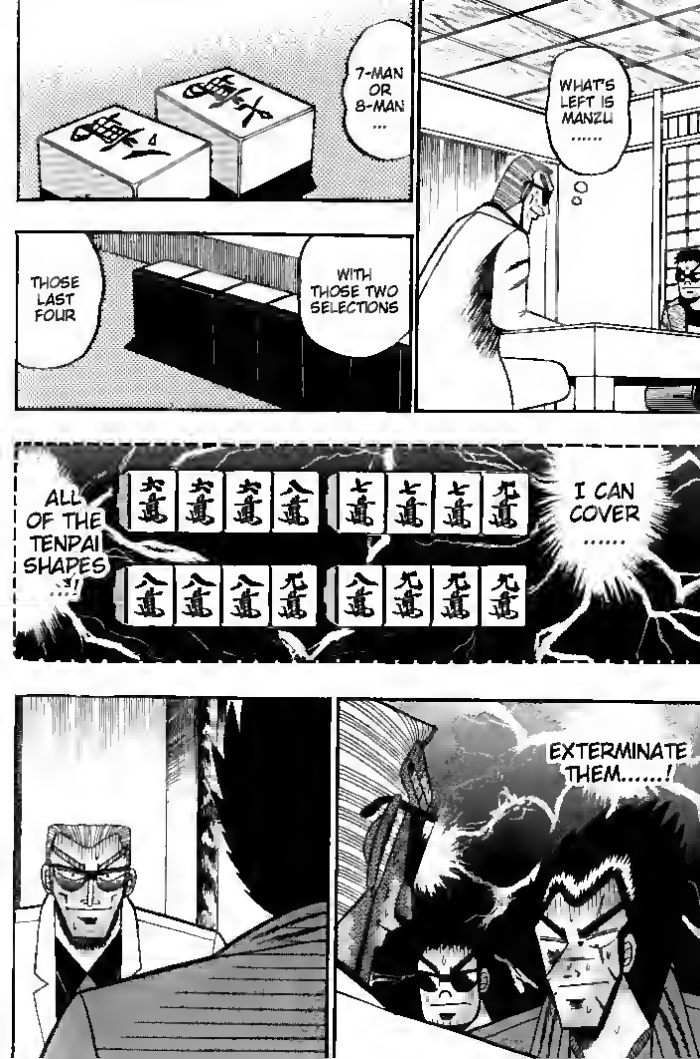
THE SHAPE OF THE UNCERTAIN SAN-AN-KOU TENPAI THAT TEN IS WAITING ON NOW IS .....

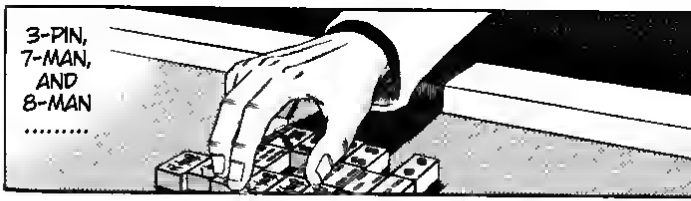
THOSE ARE ALL OF THEM .....

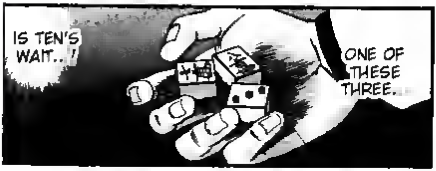
ONE OF THESE SIX.....!

IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG.....
BASED ON HIS DISCARDS AND USELESS DRAWS .....
FURITEN.....!
WAITS ARE
ALL OTHER .....
BECAUSE IT'S A GAME OF DETECTION IN STAGE B.
FURITEN ISN'T ACCEPTED
IT TOOK SOME WORK, BUT...
I'M FINALLY THERE...!
.....

THE SIX WAYS THAT TEN COULD BE IN TENPAI...!
HAVE A FAIR BIT OF OVERLAP.
THOSE WAITS
I SAY SIX, BUT
.....
TO BE BRIEF .....
.....
I CAN TAKE OUT TWO... TOTALLY ELIMINATED ...
IF I SELECT 3-PIN
THEY'RE VERY SIMILAR.
3-4-PIN WAIT
3-4-PIN WAIT
7-8-MAN WAIT
8-9-MAN WAIT
7-9-MAN WAIT
7-8-MAN WAIT


7-MAN OR 8-MAN ...
WHAT'S LEFT IS MANZU .....
WITH THOSE TWO SELECTIONS
THOSE LAST FOUR
ALL OF THE TENPAI SHAPES ...!
I CAN COVER .....
EXTERMINATE THEM.....!

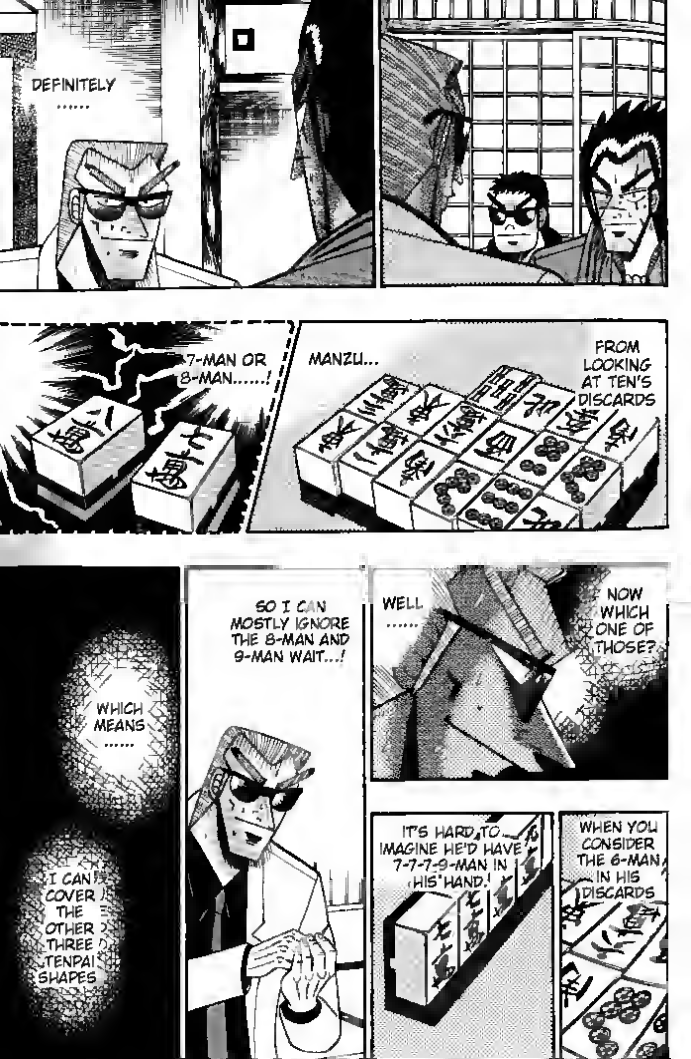

3-PIN,
7-MAN,
AND
8-MAN
.....


IS TEN'S
WAIT..!
ONE OF
THESE
THREE.

.....
ONE OF
THEM.....

WHICH
DO I
START
WITH
...!?

THESE
THREE
.....!


DEFINITELY .....
7-MAN OR 8-MAN.....!
MANZU...
FROM LOOKING AT TEN'S DISCARDS
WHICH MEANS .....
I CAN COVER THE OTHER THREE TENPAI SHAPES
SO I CAN MOSTLY IGNORE THE 8-MAN AND 9-MAN WAIT...!
WELL .....
NOW WHICH ONE OF THOSE?
IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE HE'D HAVE 7-7-7-9-MAN IN HIS HAND!
WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE 6-MAN IN HIS DISCARDS

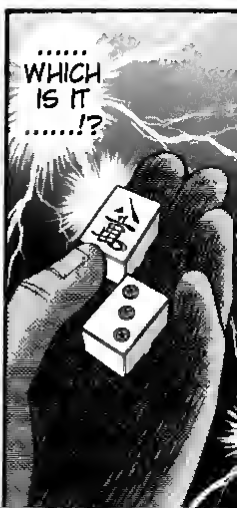
ドン!!!
THIS ONE.....!
WRONG ...!
GH ...!

IT WASN'T 7-MAN ...!
I HAVE 8-MAN AND 3-PIN LEFT ...
..... THEN .....
ONE OF TWO OPTIONS ...!

七萬
七萬
七萬
九萬

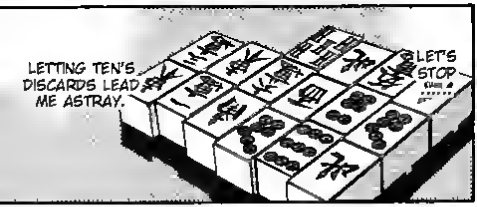
OR ...

WHICH SHOULD I TRY...? IS HIS TENPAI ONE OF THE TWO PINZU .....?

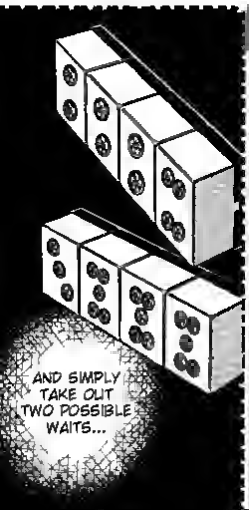

..... WHICH IS IT .....!?

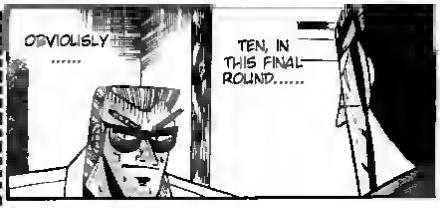
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE IT'S MANZU
FROM LOOKING AT THOSE DISCARDS

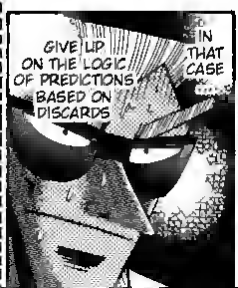
MANZU
...?

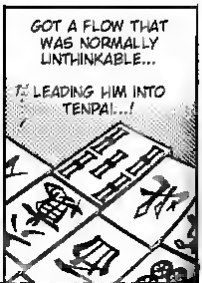

LETTING TEN'S DISCARDS LEAD ME ASTRAY.
LET'S STOP

NO


AND SIMPLY TAKE OUT TWO POSSIBLE WAITS...


OBVIOUSLY .....
TEN, IN THIS FINAL ROUND.....


GIVE UP ON THE LOGIC OF PREDICTIONS BASED ON DISCARDS
IN THAT CASE.....


GOT A FLOW THAT WAS NORMALLY UNTHINKABLE...
LEADING HIM INTO TENPAI...!

THIS ONE
oo....o!

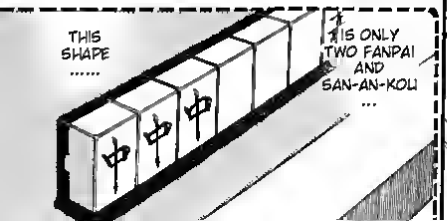
BUT ...!
.....
.....
IT WASN'T .....!
KH...!
IT WASN'T 3-PIN EITHER ...!

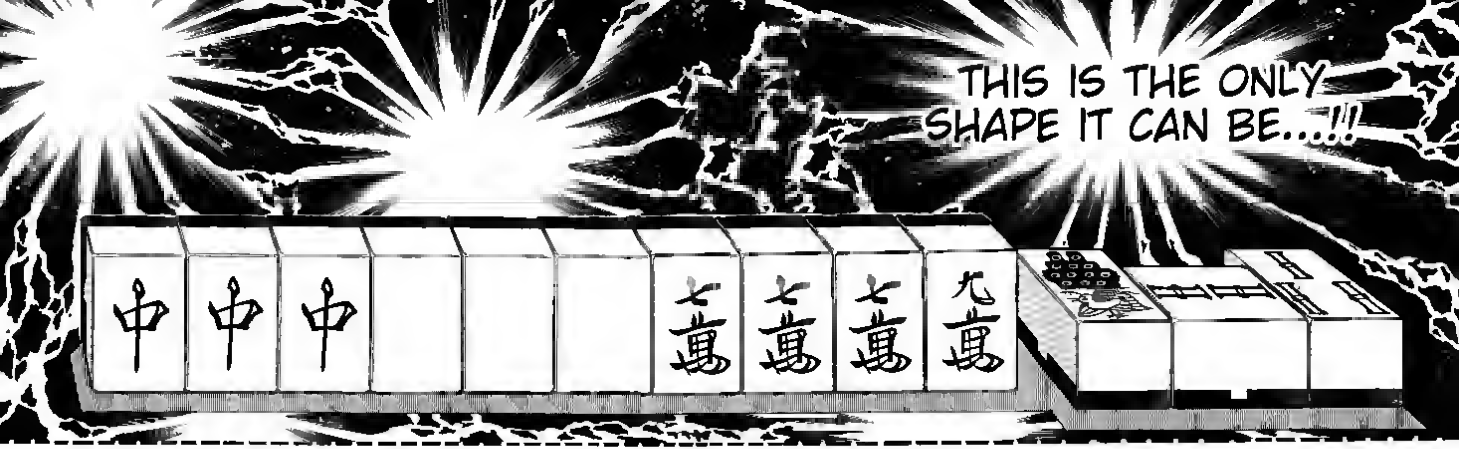
WAS IT THIS ONE...?!!
WRONG, WITH EIGHT TILES.....!
FOUR TIMES.....
AN 8-SOU 9-SOU WAIT...!
THIS IS THE WORST.....!
IT BACK-FIRED...!
AT THE VERY END
SHIT...!

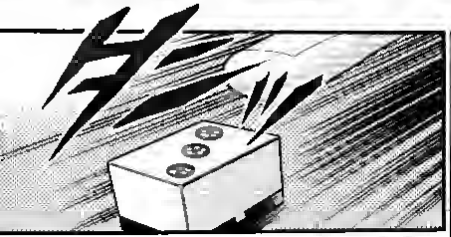
WHAAAT ...!?
TEN'S WAIT .....
WASN'T 8-MAN EITHER ...!!
第134話「三者択一」◯完

天
CHAPTER 135
CONCLUDED

IT WASN'T 8-MAN EITHER …!

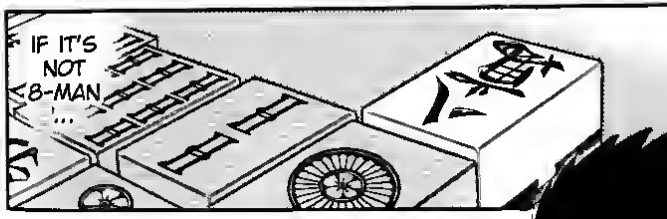


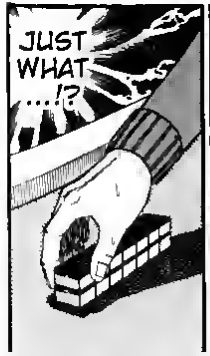

THIS IS THE ONLY SHAPE IT CAN BE...!!



.....
.....

WHAT IS TEN WAITING ON .....!?


IF IT'S NOT 8-MAN ...


JUST WHAT ....!?

THEN WHAT IN THE WORLD ...

WHAT
....!?

KAN ...!
HUH ...!?
AH... AAAH ...!

THAT'S THE HAND HE'S GOING FOR...!?
OH SHIT.....!

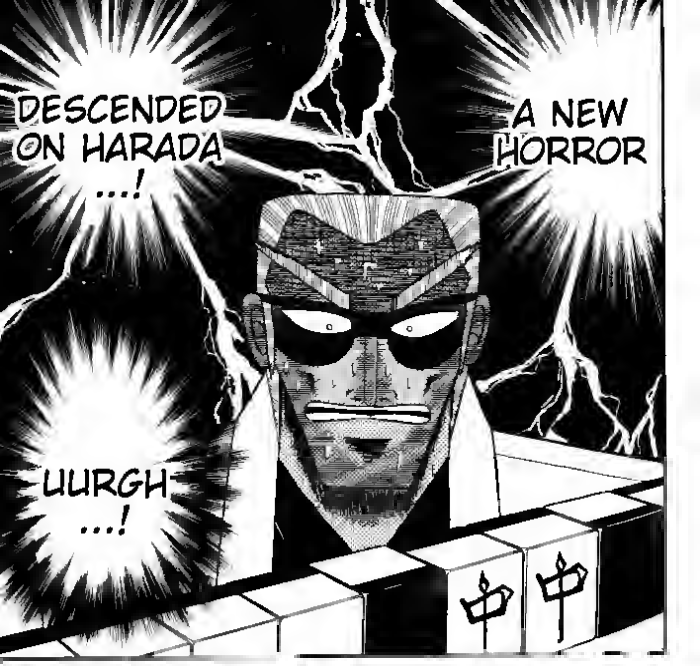
IT'S A PERFECT MANGAN...
IF YOU ADD THAT ONE HAN
RINSHAN KAIHOU...
ADD TO THAT
HAKU, CHUN, 1 DORA.
RIGHT NOW HIS HAND'S YAKU ARE...

HE DIDN'T NEED SAN-AN-KOU ...
HE'LL REACH MANGAN .....
ズ
カチッ
ズ
DON'T DRAW IT...!
GH ....!

DON'T DRAW IT.....!
FORTUNATELY, THE KAN-DORA IS 9-PIN.
TEN CAN'T HAVE A GROUP THAT INCLUDES THE NEW DORA ...!
I KNOW WHERE ALL FOUR OF THE 8-PIN ARE NOW ..!

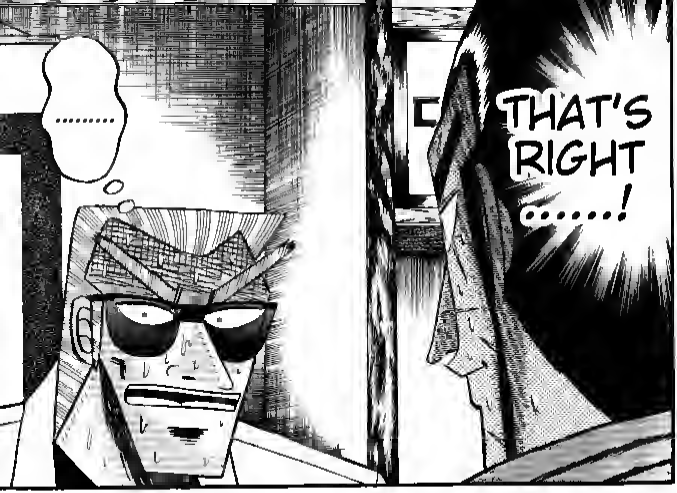
AND IF HE DOESN'T DRAW IT .....
HE DIDN'T DRAW IT...!

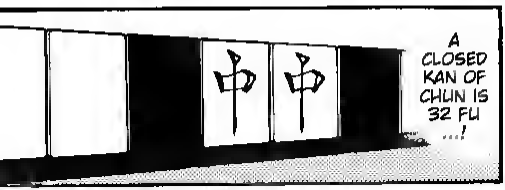
TEN DIDN'T GET RIN-SHAN KAI-HOU ...!


DESCENDED ON HARADA ...!
A NEW HORROR
UURGH ...!

A CLOSED KAN ON CHUN MEANS THAT
HOLD ON ...!
URGH ...!

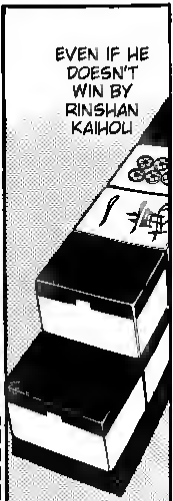
中
中
中
中





A CLOSED KAN OF CHUN IS 32 FU ...!

EVEN IF HE DOESN'T WIN BY RINSHAN KAIHOU



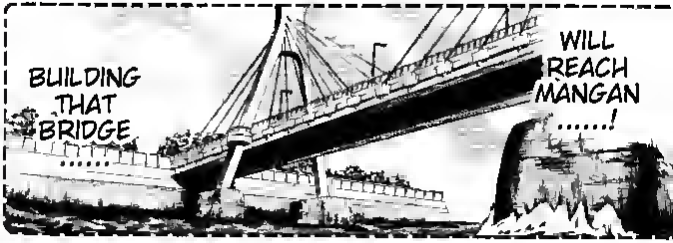
AND THERE'S A CLOSED TRIPLE OF HAKU IN HIS HAND

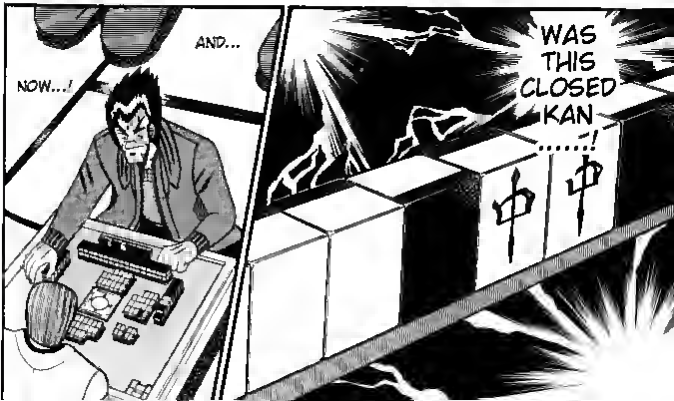
WHEN YOU ADD 8 FU...

THIS HAND ADDS UP TO 64 FU ...!

	CLOSED KAN OF CHUN	32
	CLOSED TRIPLE OF HAKU	8
	TSUMO FU	2
	WAIT FU	2
+	BASE FU	20
		64

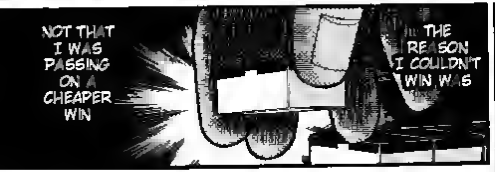
THE 3 HAN THAT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN MANGAN
IF IT'S 70 FU
64 FU ROUNDS UP TO 70 FU...

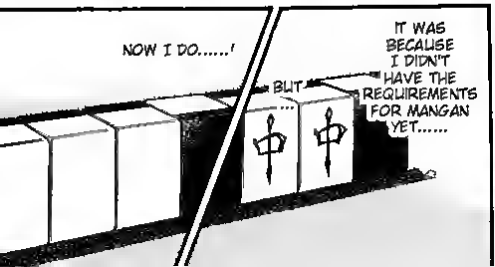

BUILDING THAT BRIDGE.....
WILL REACH MANGAN.....!

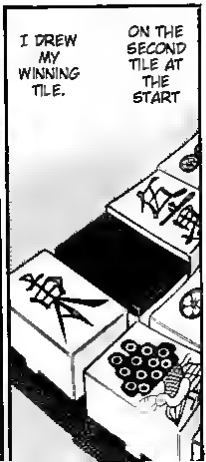

NOW...!
AND...
WAS THIS CLOSED KAN.....!
中
中

I JUST HAVE TO DRAW MY ONE TILE ...!

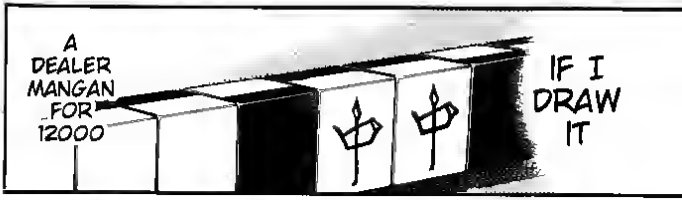
HARADA MAY HAVE FIGURED IT OUT NOW, TOO.....
YES ...


NOT THAT I WAS PASSING ON A CHEAPER WIN
THE REASON I COULDN'T WIN WAS

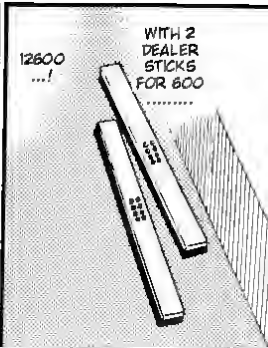

NOW I DO.....!
BUT ...
IT WAS BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MANGAN YET.....


I DREW MY WINNING TILE.
ON THE SECOND TILE AT THE START

NOW JUST TO DRAW IT.....!


A DEALER MANGAN FOR 12000
IF I DRAW IT

A PERFECT COMEBACK WIN...!
AGAINST THE 12000 POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HARADA AND ME

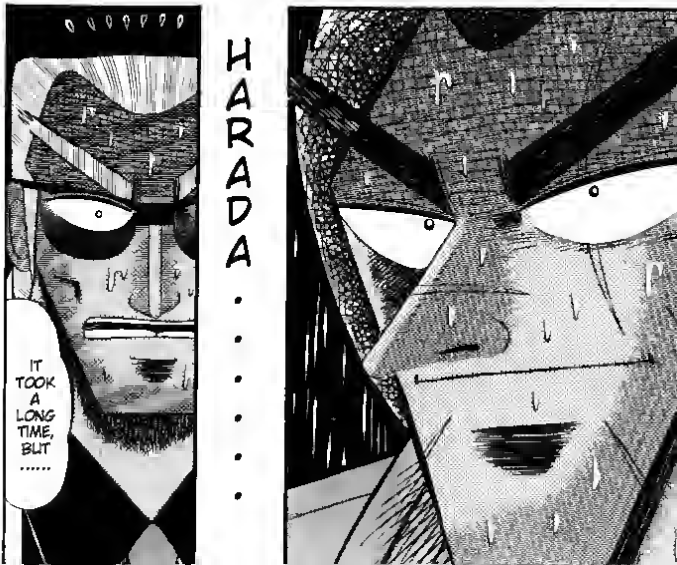

12600 ...!
WITH 2 DEALER STICKS FOR 600 .....

I CAN TURN IT AROUND ...!
EVEN IN A BAD SITUATION LIKE THAT
THE ENEMY WAS QUICK TO ADVANCE.....
NOT MAKING PROGRESS WITH MY DRAWS.....
A TERRIBLE STARTING HAND.....
YOU CAN GET IT ...!
YOU FOLLOW THE POSSIBILITES WITH SIMPLE SINCERITY.....
IF...

A COME-BACK WIN .....!

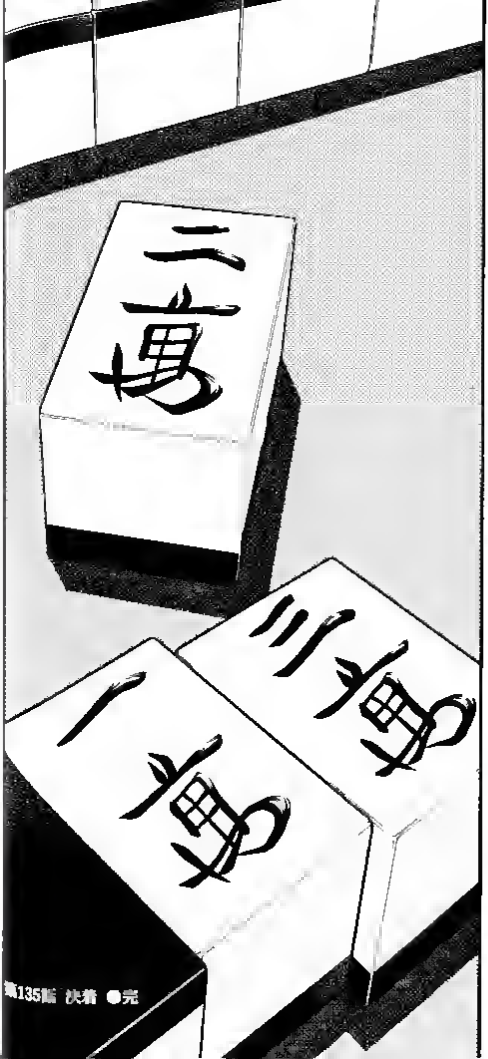
YOU CAN CLIMB UP .....!

TO VICTORY ...!
T... TEN ...!


HARADA.....
IT TOOK A LONG TIME, BUT .....

IT'S OVER ...!
URGH ...!

HAKU, CHUN, 1 DORA .....!
MANGAN .....!

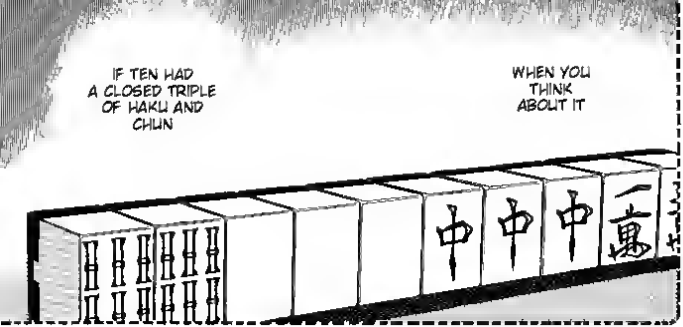

CONCLUDED.....!
三萬
三萬
二萬
第135話 決着 ●完

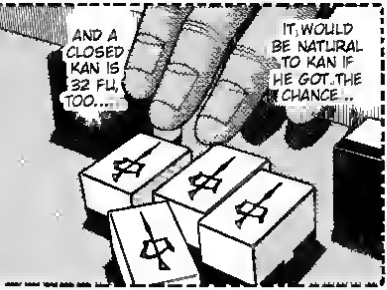
CHAPTER 136
REALITY

VICTORY
WENT TO
EAST
CAMP
.....!

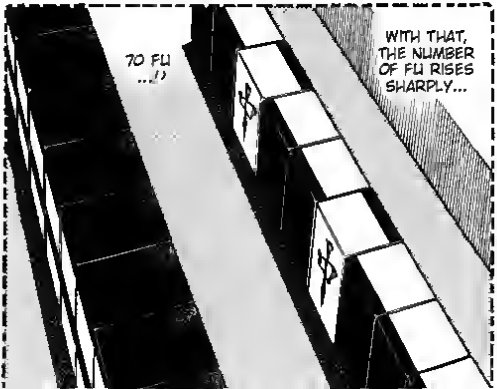
ざわ…
TEN WON…!

ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…
GH…!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I SCREWED UP…!

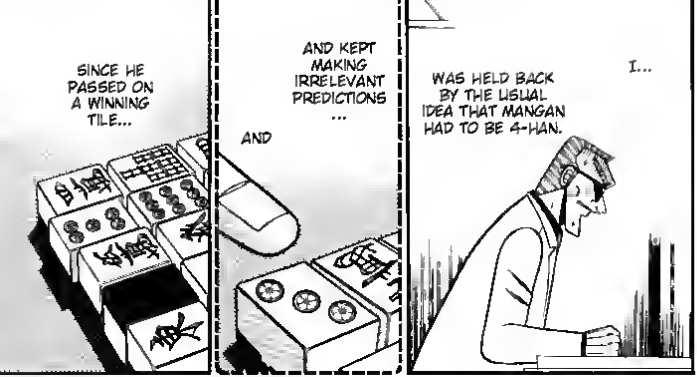


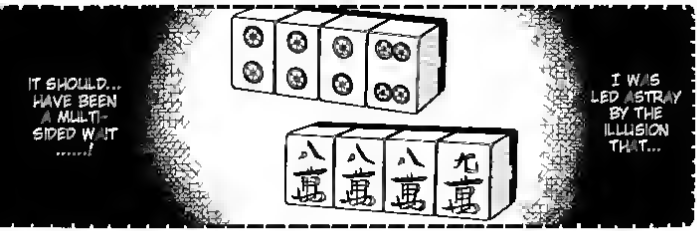


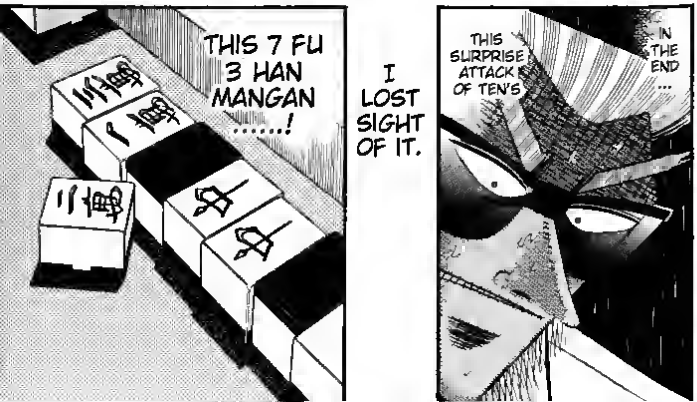
A 3-FAN MANGAN ...

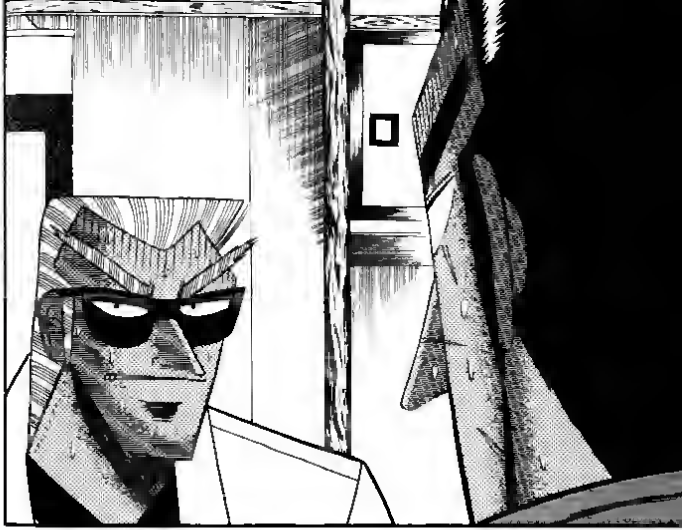


CAN HAPPEN TOO...!
THAT'S WHAT HE HAD ...!


SINCE HE PASSED ON A WINNING TILE...
AND
AND KEPT MAKING IRRELEVANT PREDICTIONS ...
I...
WAS HELD BACK BY THE USUAL IDEA THAT MANGAN HAD TO BE 4-HAN.

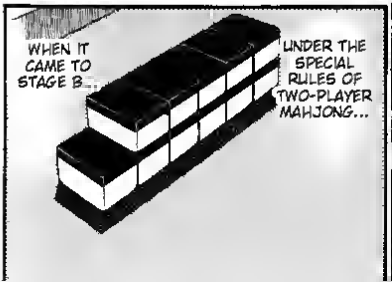

IT SHOULD... HAVE BEEN A MULTI-SIDED WAIT .....!
I WAS LED ASTRAY BY THE ILLUSION THAT...

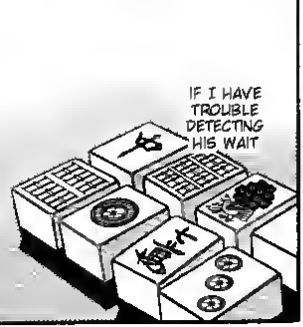

THIS 7 FU 3 HAN MANGAN .....!
I LOST SIGHT OF IT.
THIS SURPRISE ATTACK OF TEN'S
IN THE END ...

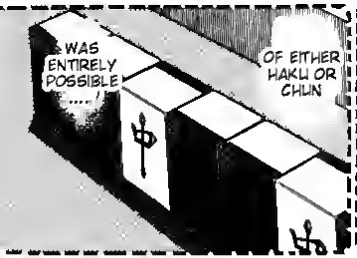


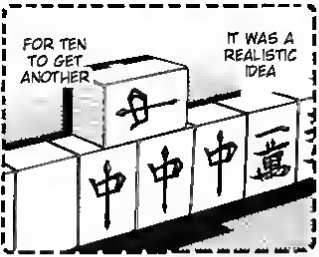
IT WASN'T A SURPRISE ATTACK!
.....!

NO
...

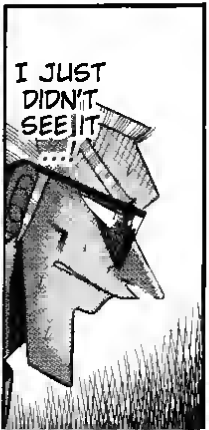

WHEN IT CAME TO STAGE B...
UNDER THE SPECIAL RULES OF TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG...





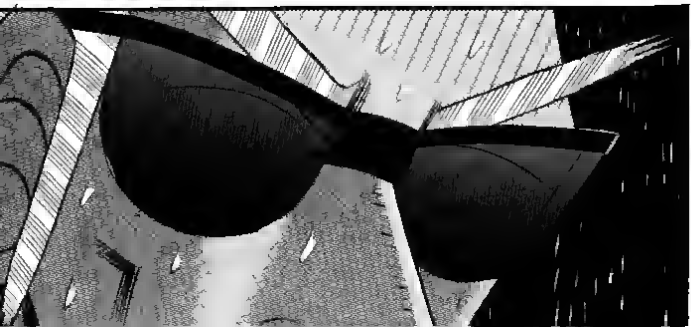


IN OTHER WORDS...

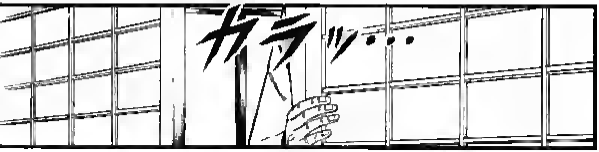


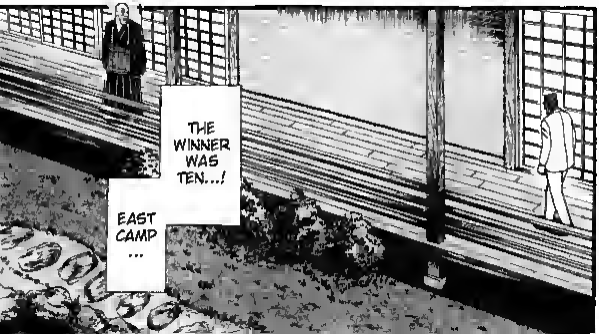
TEN'S
"REALITY"
.....

MUST BE DEEPER
THAN MY "REALITY"
.....!



8
AND THUS ...





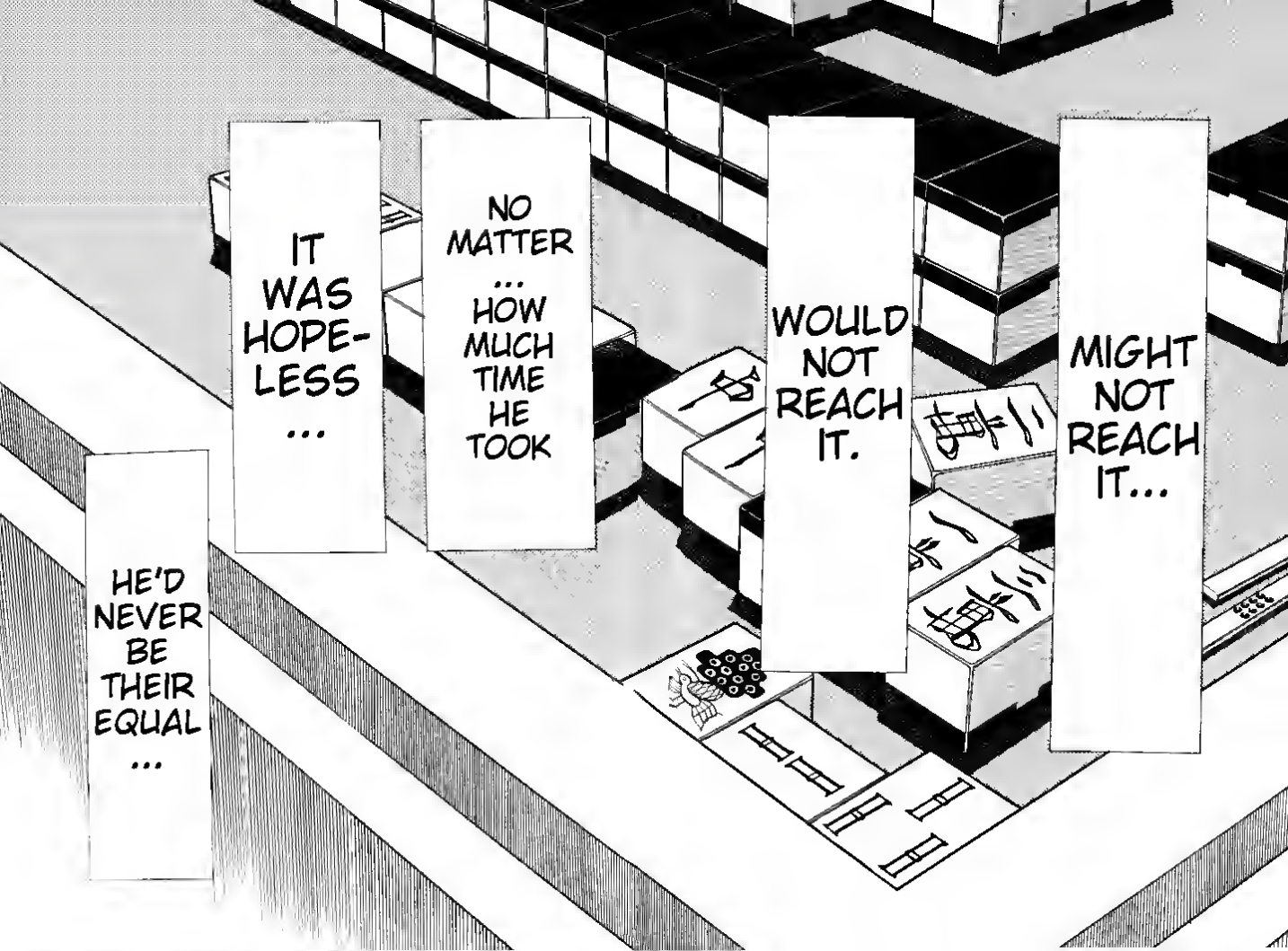
THE BATTLE OF EAST AND WEST WAS OVER…!

THE EXTENSION OF THE BATTLE TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
HAD LASTED ONE FULL HOUR ...
GOING ON UNTIL THE 17TH BATTLE
TEN, 30900
UNTIL AT THE VERY END, THE POINTS EACH PERSON HAD WERE
THAT DIFFERENCE OF 600
HARADA, 30300.
BY THAT SLIM MARGIN, TEN TOOK HOLD OF THE GAME -...!

AGAINST HARADA'S SUPERIORITY
TEN'S TENACITY
IN THAT RING ...
HE FINALLY MADE HIS WAY TO A COMEBACK ..!

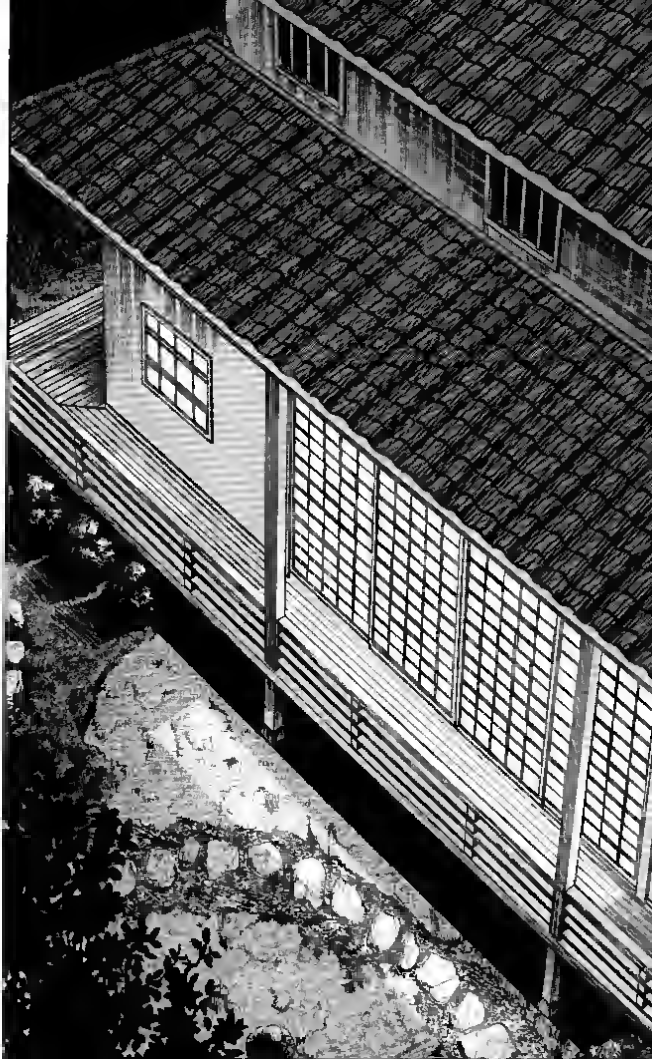
EXCITE-
MENT
...!

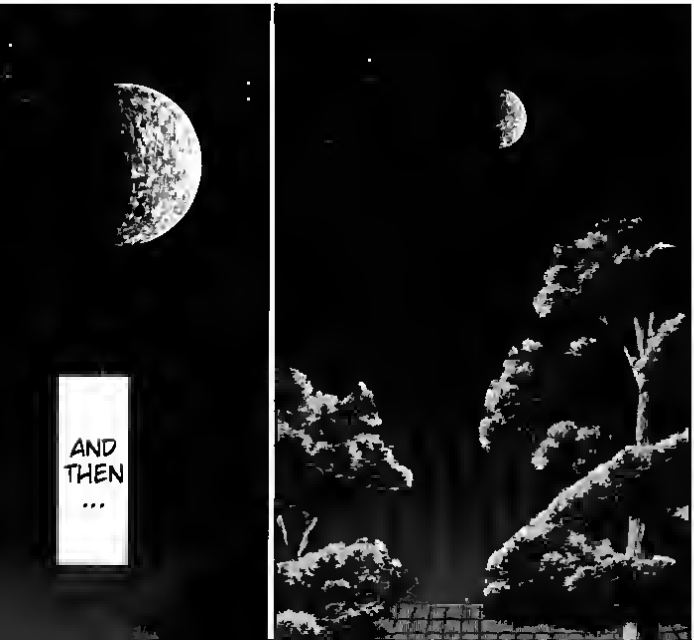
BUT ...
IN THE MIDST OF THAT JOY
IN HIRO-YUKI'S HEART
AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FEELING EMERGED ...
POWER-LESS-NESS.
HE WAS UNABLE TO RESIST THE PUSH OF A CERTAIN KIND OF DESPAIR...
A...
SENSE OF HIS OWN LIMITATIONS ...
MAYBE ...
HE...


MIGHT NOT REACH IT...
WOULD NOT REACH IT.
NO MATTER ... HOW MUCH TIME HE TOOK
IT WAS HOPE-LESS ...
HE'D NEVER BE THEIR EQUAL ...

TEN AND AKAGI .....!
HE WOULD NEVER EQUAL, IN HIS ENTIRE LIFE .....

NEVER IN HIS WHOLE LIFE...




AND
THEN
...

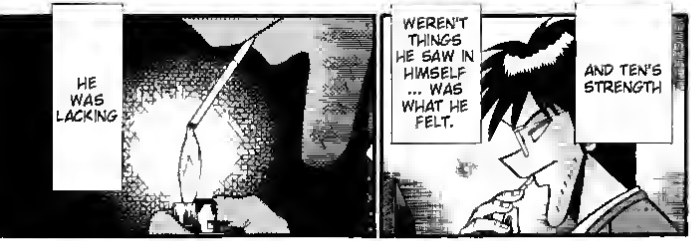
NINE YEARS LATER ...
LATER ...
SEEYA .....
NINE YEARS ...
TIME FLOWED PAST...
THAT LONG, HEATED EAST-WEST BATTLE
FROM THOSE MEMO-RIES OF PASSION
IN THIS YEAR, 1999 ...

HIROYUKI TURNED 29.
THIS YEAR .....

IN THE END, THE IDEA OF MAKING A LIVING THROUGH MAHJONG
WAS HOW HE LIVED OUT HIS DAYS.
WORKING AS A SALARYMAN FOR A STATIONARY GOODS MANUFACTURER
ISN'T WHAT HIROYUKI CHOSE.
HE HAD THE CHANCE.
AT THAT POINT, AS A REP PLAYER... HE COULD HAVE MADE A LIVING AS AN UNDERGROUND PRO PLAYER.
HIROYUKI WAS PART OF EAST CAMP, THE SIDE THAT WON.
IN THAT EAST-WEST BATTLE
BUT ...

HIS OWN LIMIT-ATIONS
AFTER SEEING
HE KNEW ...
HIROYUKI WITHDREW ON HIS OWN.
AND THEN .....
HE KNEW HE COULD NEVER HOPE TO EQUAL THAT.
NOT DESIRING, NOT EVEN FEARING DEATH...
AKAGI'S SUPERIOR GENIUS...

UNABLE TO GIVE IN, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS
BOTH TEN'S UNBEATABLE MAHJONG
THE STRENGTH... IN BOTH WINNING AND LIFE ITSELF


HE WAS LACKING
WEREN'T THINGS HE SAW IN HIMSELF ... WAS WHAT HE FELT.
AND TEN'S STRENGTH

DESPITE THAT, MAYBE HE SHOULD HAVE GONE ON...?
BUT ...
THE QUALITIES TO MAKE A LIVING AT MAHJONG...
THAT PRECIOUS SOMETHING INSIDE HIMSELF ...!

EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW HE WAS SECOND-RATE ...!